

Australian Investment Strategy

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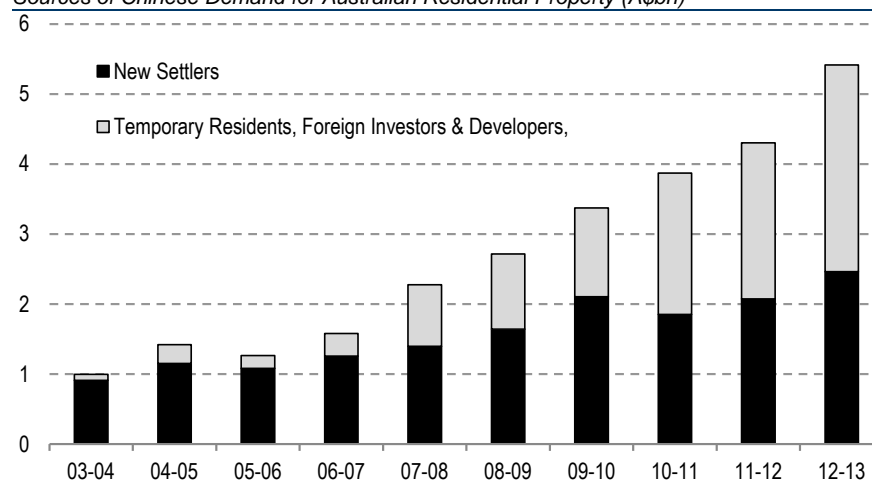
ECONOMICS AND STRATEGY

The Chinese Property Boom Down Under

- **An appetite for Aussie property:** The Chinese are currently purchasing more than \$5bn of Australian residential property per annum. This accounts for 12% of new housing supply. They are concentrating their buying and acquiring 18% of new supply in Sydney and 14% in Melbourne. While Australia has some of the most unaffordable housing in the world, further strong Chinese demand can push prices even higher.
- **China is getting richer:** There are currently 1.1mn Chinese that can easily afford to buy an apartment in Sydney. We estimate the number will rise by 30% by 2020. This should support a further \$44bn of Australian residential property purchases over the next seven years. They purchased \$24bn over the past seven. As long as Australia remains open for business, our companies should also benefit from the *next* stage China's economic development.
- **Stocks:** Stocks that should continue to gain from this longer-term theme include the developers, building material companies, property websites and banks. We don't discount the possibility of a Chinese entity taking over one of these companies. Our portfolio is already long Mirvac, CSR and National Australia Bank; we now add Fairfax.

Figure 1: The Chinese want to buy your house

Sources of Chinese Demand for Australian Residential Property (\$bn)



Source: Foreign Investment Review Board, Australian Department of Immigration, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Credit Suisse estimates

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The Chinese Property Boom Down Under

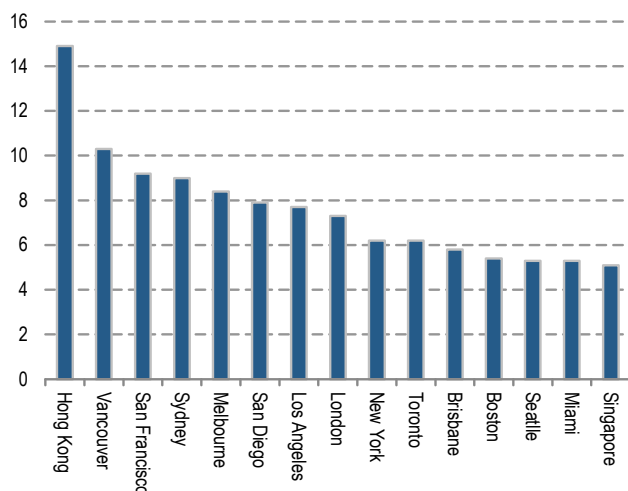
Australia has one of the most expensive property markets in the world. While there have been many drivers of higher house prices, one is being singled out more than any other at the moment — the Chinese. In this report we attempt to provide evidence of the extent of Chinese buying Australian property. Our analysis suggests they are currently pouring in more than \$5bn into our residential property market per year. This accounts for 12% of new supply. The Chinese are clearly concentrating their buying in Sydney and Melbourne where they are purchasing 18% and 14% of new housing supply, respectively.

We forecast Chinese buying power will increase as the economy develops and the population becomes wealthier. They purchased \$24bn of Australian housing over the past seven years; we forecast they will purchase \$44bn over the next seven, to 2020. Local companies were major beneficiaries of the early stage of Chinese economic development. As long as Australia remains open for business, we expect our companies should also benefit from the next stage. Stocks that should continue to gain from this longer-term theme include the developers, building material companies, banks and property websites. We don't discount the possibility of a Chinese entity taking over one of these companies. Our portfolio is already long Mirvac, CSR and National Australia Bank; we now add Fairfax.

The Dragon Discovers the Quarter Acre Dream

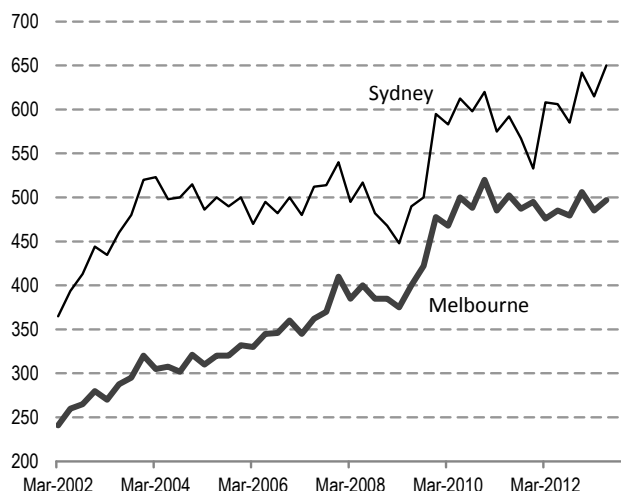
Australia has some of the most expensive property in the world. House price to income ratios rank Sydney and Melbourne four and five amongst the most expensive big cities in the world, surveyed by Demographia (Figure 2). The median house price has risen in both cities by 45% and 33%, respectively, since financial crisis lows (Figure 3). Incomes are up just 18% and 25%. A generation of Australians are being priced out of the property market. Many face a life time of renting. Others are considering a move to the cheaper city fringes, areas which are notorious for their considerable infrastructure deficit.

Figure 2: The Aussie east coast is expensive
Highest House Price to Income* Ratio. Cities More than 2m People



* Income per adult. Source: Demographia Int. Housing Survey

Figure 3: Sydney & Melbourne home owners are happy
Median Established House Price in Sydney and Melbourne (\$'000)



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Chinese buyers are often cited as a reason for unaffordable housing in Australia. The Australian media has been lit up with emotive reports of how the Chinese are pushing up prices to stratospheric levels. Data outlining the magnitude of flows into Australian property from China is difficult to gather. Below we have pieced together information from a number of sources including the Australian Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB), Australian Department of Immigration (ADI) and Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to provide a credible estimate of how much Chinese money is being invested in Australian residential property. Our assumptions are in Appendix 1.

Paths to the Quarter Acre Dream

Chinese money enters the Australian property market via four legal and observable routes.

First, a Chinese citizen, who resides outside of Australia or is a temporary resident in Australia, buys a new dwelling. Often this purchase is off-the-plan. She, or the developer of the property, needs FIRB approval of the purchase/sale. There is no limit to the number of new dwellings that she can buy and we know that Aussie banks are happy lending to these buyers. They generally apply a loan to valuation cap of 80% to foreign residents and apply a 25% reduction to income when assessing the potential size of the loan.

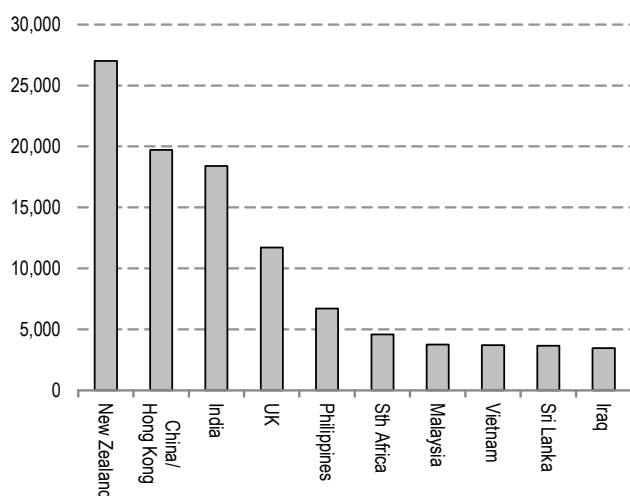
Second, a Chinese citizen who resides in Australia on a temporary basis buys an established house to live in. Current rules allow for only one dwelling to be purchased. This is where we can capture the activity of the Significant Investor Visa (SIV) holders. The SIV was introduced in 2012 and allows high-net-worth individuals, and their families, to temporarily reside in Australia as long as they commit \$5mn to approved Australian assets. This amount does not include their house. They can become permanent residents after four years or extend their temporary status. There have been 65 SIVs granted in 2013, 59 of which have been to Chinese citizens.

Third, a Chinese citizen, who resides outside of Australia or is a temporary resident, buys residential property for redevelopment. This buyer needs to ask the FIRB for approval which is usually provided as long as she will increase the Australian housing stock. The development should be at least two new dwellings for each one she is acquiring. Our discussions with real estate agents dealing on behalf of the Chinese suggest many of the smaller projects are done with little or no debt. Developers are looking for an asset to provide a positive real return and escape the repression of negative real yields in Chinese deposits.

Fourth, a recent Chinese settler in Australia can buy property for investment or residential purposes. This buyer does not need approval to buy property as he is a permanent resident. To estimate this source of flows we employed data from the Australian Department of Immigration (ADI). In 2012–13 financial year there were 152,000 people permanently settling in Australia and almost 20 thousand (13%) were from either China or Hong Kong (Figure 4). Three-quarters of these immigrants settled in either NSW or Victoria and the ADI notes that most were in the capital cities of Sydney and Melbourne.

Figure 4: Chinese are 2nd biggest group of immigrants

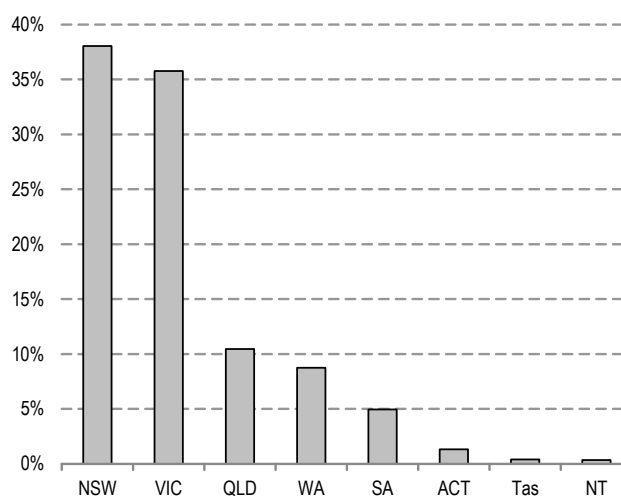
Australian Settlers by Country of Origin 2012-13



Source: Australian Department of Immigration, Credit Suisse

Figure 5: Chinese love the east coast

Proportion of Chinese/Hong Kong Settlers by State of Settlement



Source: Australian Department of Immigration, Credit Suisse

In addition to these observable flows, there are others we cannot accurately measure. For example, if a Chinese resident uses an Australian-based family member, friend or solicitor to buy property with their own money. Or when an Australian citizen sells her apartment in

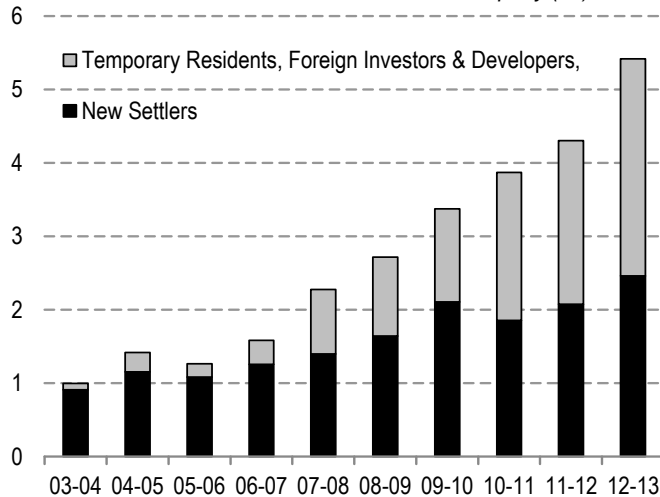
Shanghai and switches into a Melbourne Docklands flat. While this is still money entering Australia from China, we are not able to measure it. For this reason, we believe our calculations may understate the potential Chinese flows into Aussie property.

Size of the flows

In Figure 6 we illustrate the demand for Australian property. In aggregate the Chinese are currently committing \$5.4bn per year to Australian residential property. The flows are now evenly split between settlers and others. In previous years the biggest flows were from new Chinese settlers. The current value of total purchases is equivalent to 12% of the value of Australian building approvals. While significant, this amount is probably not enough by itself to significantly drive up property prices across Australia. However, it is clear the Chinese are concentrating their purchases.

Figure 6: Chinese demand for Aussie property

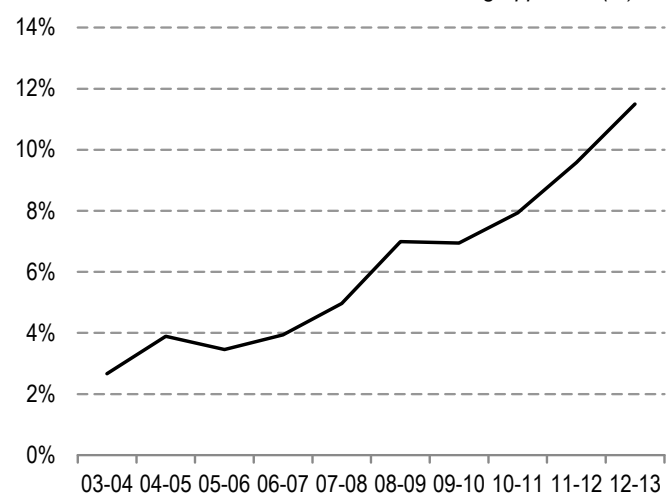
Various Sources of Chinese Demand for Aussie Property (\$b)



Source: FIRB, ADI, ABS, Credit Suisse estimates

Figure 7: Chinese buying 12% of new housing supply

Value of Chinese Demand / Value of Aust. Housing Approvals (%)

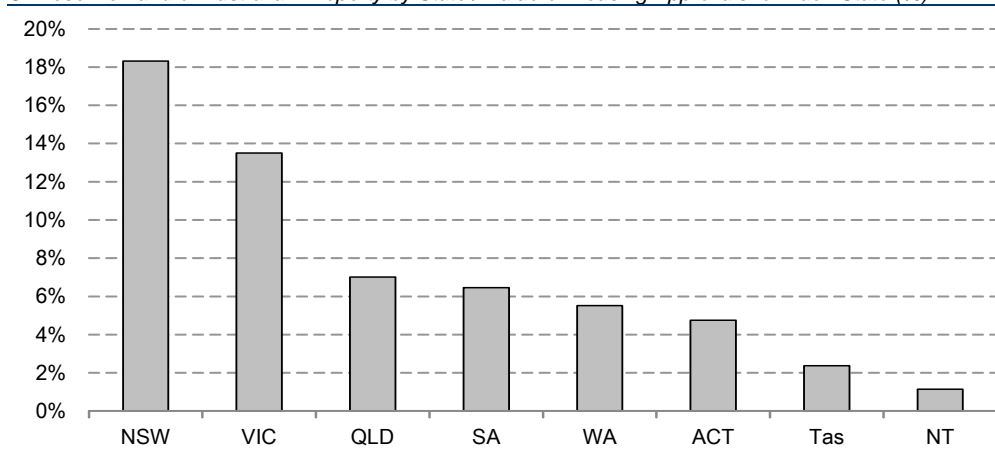


Source: FIRB, ADI, ABS, Credit Suisse estimates

In Figure 7 we calculate the Chinese are buying 18% of new dwelling supply in NSW and 14% in Victoria. We can calculate this as the FIRB provides a breakdown of investment approvals by state and the Australian Department of Immigrations provides details of where immigrants settle. While the Chinese may not be a major player in the *national* housing market, they are clearly a much more powerful force in *Sydney* and *Melbourne*.

Figure 8: Chinese purchasing more than 18% of new supply in Sydney

Chinese Demand of Australian Property by State / Value of Housing Approvals for Each State (%)

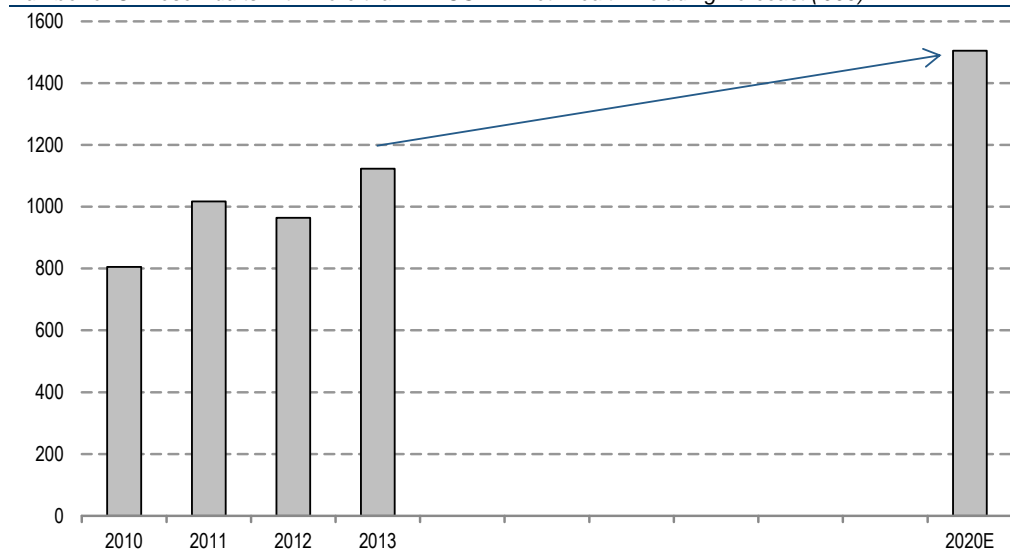


Source: FIRB, ADI, ABS, Credit Suisse estimates

Still More Money to Come

We believe these flows are likely to grow. The combination of rising income levels, lower capital barriers and further ease of doing an international property transaction should ensure there will be even more demand from the Chinese in the years ahead. We can estimate the potential growth in demand by forecasting the number of Chinese that can afford to buy a Sydney apartment.

Figure 9: More than a million millionaires in China right now
Number of Chinese Adults with more than 1m USD in Net Wealth Including Forecast ('000)



Source: Credit Suisse Global Wealth Databook, Credit Suisse estimates

There are currently 1.1mn US-dollar millionaires in China, according to the [Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report](#). These individuals can easily afford to buy an apartment in say Chatswood — an upper-middle class area of Sydney renowned to be popular with the Chinese. The median apartment in Chatswood currently sells for \$700,000 and has risen by 15% over the past 12 months. If we assume growth in the number of Chinese millionaires slows to 5% p.a. for the next seven years, down from 12% over the past three, then there will be more than 1.5mn wealthy individuals by 2020 or 30% more than current. The IMF forecasts nominal GDP in China will double over the same period. This additional demand should support a further \$44bn of Australian residential property purchases over the next seven years. They purchased \$24bn over the past seven.

The Global Property Investor Based in China

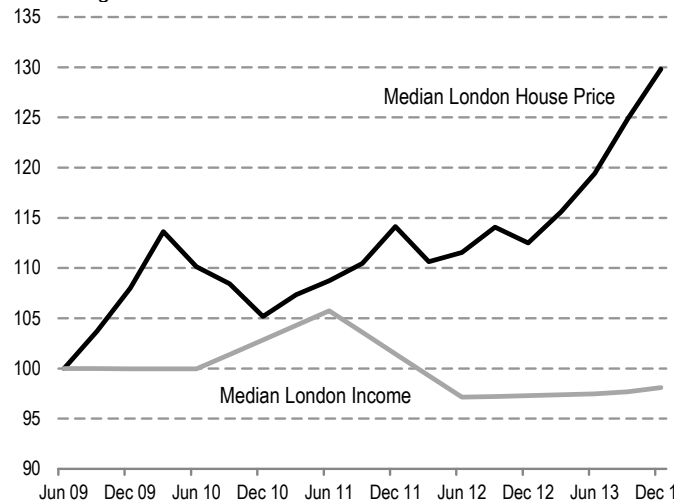
While Sydney and Melbourne are proving to be popular destinations for Chinese property buyers, they are not the only ones. Chinese investors are also big buyers of property in other cities around the world. There has been a fast growing web-industry to service these new global property investors. Even REA Group in Australia is developing a portal for Chinese investors. The most popular website for the Chinese buying international property is junwai.com. In addition to Sydney and Melbourne junwai.com notes that New York, Los Angeles, Vancouver and London are some of the most popular cities for Chinese buyers.

So Sydney apartments are now being compared to those on the other side of the world. We can only imagine that when the British pound depreciates the Chinese will focus less on Sydney property and more on London. Perhaps the recent decision by the Canadian government to end its version of the Significant Investors Visa (which was also exceptionally popular with the Chinese) will redirect demand to Australia — Hong Kong's 2012 introduction of a 15% stamp duty for non-local buyers would have. The marginal buyer of Sydney and Melbourne real-estate has changed, as have the drivers of property prices.

The emergence of the global property investor means that valuation methods like house price to local income ratios are becoming obsolete. Residents of central London have known this for some time (Figure 10). Many of which are well paid investment bankers but are still struggling to buy in the Capital where many of the owners are wealthy individuals from the Middle-East, North Africa and other parts of Europe. While the differences in recent house price and wage inflation in Sydney has not been as extreme as London just yet (Figure 11), we think the two cities have plenty in common. In both cities property rights are protected. Both cities are in transparent democracies and within an overnight flight away from less democratic countries with less transparent governments. And both the UK and Australia have their borders open to new immigrants, especially if they are rich.

Figure 10: London incomes down, houses up

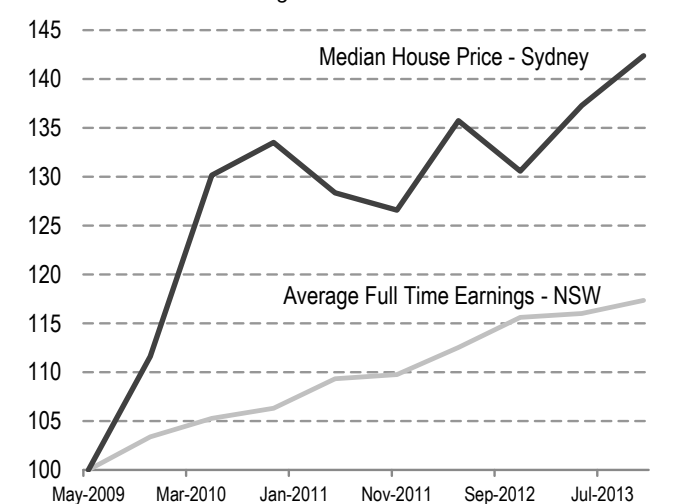
Median London House Prices vs Median London Incomes Rebased to 100 during financial crisis



Source: Halifax, Bank of England, Credit Suisse

Figure 11: Sydney incomes up, houses up more

Median Sydney House Price vs Average Adult Full-time Earnings in NSW. Rebased to 100 during financial crisis



Source: ABS, Credit Suisse estimates

Chinese Property Buyers and Aussie Stocks

Australian companies have clearly benefitted from China's first stage of development which involved rising commodity intensity. As long as Australia remains open for business we believe companies should benefit from the next stage of Chinese development which involves greater external investment. With the help of our Australian research team we highlight stocks which should continue to gain from the theme of Chinese buying Australian property (Figure 12). The obvious beneficiaries are the Australian developers with large residential exposure. Australand and Mirvac have noted that foreigners (primarily Chinese) are buying 10%–20% of new supply. Meriton (unlisted) has stated foreigners (mostly Chinese) are buying 12%–15% of its apartments. We don't discount the possibility of a Chinese entity taking over an Australian developer.

Other companies to benefit should include those in the building materials sector like CSR, Boral and Adelaide Brighton. Residential exposure for these companies is between 25%–60%. Also property website owners like Fairfax and REA Group should gain as housing transactions remain solid and house prices are supported. The latter is beginning to tap into the Chinese buyer directly. Rising [property transactions should support DIY retailers](#) like Bunnings (Wesfarmers) and Masters (Woolworths). The banks should be positively affected by this theme as house prices continue to rise and the Chinese provide a new, albeit marginal, source of mortgage demand.

Figure 12: Investment ideas for the Chinese property boom Down Under*Companies exposed to further Chinese residential investment in Australia*

Company	Mkt Cap (\$bn)	Comment
Developers <i>Currently 10%–20% of residential sales going to foreigners, primarily Chinese</i>		
Stockland	9.0	16% of operating profits from residential development.
Lend Lease	6.7	17% of EBITDA from residential development. Building high profile project Barangaroo.
Mirvac Group	6.4	23% of EBIT from residential development. Additional residential inventory.
Australand	2.2	31% of EBIT from residential development.
Building Materials <i>Currently 25%–60% residential exposure</i>		
Boral	4.3	35% of revenue from residential
Adelaide Brighton	2.7	24% of revenue from residential
CSR	1.6	60% of revenue from residential, \$70m residential land-bank.
Property Websites <i>Rising transaction volumes, direct business from China</i>		
REA Group	6.5	Owens #1 property website in Australia. 80% market share and makes up +90% of group value.
Fairfax Media	2.2	Owens #2 property website in Australia. 20% market share and makes up half of group value.
DIY <i>Pick up in residential transactions positive for DIY retailers</i>		
Wesfarmers	48.9	DIY retailer Bunnings makes up 26% of EBIT.
Woolworths	45.9	DIY retailer Masters is currently loss making but being restructured.
Major Banks <i>Supported by rising house prices. Chinese provide a marginal new source of mortgage demand</i>		
Unlisted		
Dulux	2.0	Premium paints producer
GWA Group	0.9	Bathrooms and kitchens supplier

Source: Company data, Credit Suisse estimates

We already own Mirvac, CSR and National Australia Bank in our Long Portfolio. Today we add Fairfax Media as well. The company generates double-digit FCF margins and trades on almost an 8% FCF yield. This provides plenty of scope for dividend increases. Fraser McLeish and Lucas Goode [note the core business is stabilising and believe a partial IPO of Domain will be a significant catalyst.](#)

Strategy Outlook

The Chinese are currently pouring in more than \$5bn into Australian residential property per year and are buying 12% of all new supply. We believe this demand will only increase as the Chinese become wealthier and the links between the two countries become even stronger. We forecast \$44bn of Chinese property purchases over the next seven years to 2020. There was \$24bn in the past seven years. While Australian companies were major beneficiaries of the early stage of Chinese economic development which involved rising commodity intensity, it seems our companies could also be beneficiaries of the next phase which involves more external investment. Australian residential property, especially in Sydney and Melbourne, are likely to remain expensive on price to local earnings measures. However, in the new world of the Global Property Investor, these valuation measures are now obsolete. Companies we believe should benefit as Chinese demand continues to grow include Mirvac, CSR, National Australia Bank and Fairfax.

Appendix 1 – Assumptions

As we highlight above, there are four forms of Chinese investment into Australian residential property. For three of these we employ data from the Foreign Investment Review Board (FIRB). In its annual report, which comes out eight to nine months after financial year-end, the FIRB details the number and value of investment approvals for property. It does this for both residential and commercial. Within residential it provides a further breakdown by established dwellings, new build and redevelopment.

In 2012–13 Chinese investors received approval to buy \$5.9bn worth of Australian property but the FIRB does not provide the residential/commercial split. It notes "the Treasury is mindful of the need to protect commercially sensitive information and the privacy of applicants". We assume two-thirds is residential. We concede this is higher than the average for investors from all countries. But there is at least one clue to suggest the residential mix is considerably higher for the Chinese buyer. The average value of investment approval for China is the lowest of all countries. This suggests a large number of residential purchases, not commercial property or other assets which are transacted at much higher dollar amounts. In fact the average value of investment approval is low for almost all Asian-based investors. It seems that the biggest residential investors are our neighbours. It seems that investors from further afield are buyers of commercial property or other assets.

We assume the Chinese investor only takes up two-thirds of the value of their approval. We believe this is conservative; if an investor goes through the trouble of getting approval, she is highly likely to transact. If the transaction does not take place the investor will withdraw the proposal. This is not counted in the FIRB data. It takes about 40 days to be notified of an approval from the date of submission.

The FIRB also provides residential investor approvals by state. As of 2012–13 about 38% of approvals were for property in NSW, 40% in Victoria and 13% in Queensland. Again the FIRB does not provide the value of state approvals by country of investor. We assume the Chinese invest in line with all other foreigners.

The Australian Department of Immigration (ADI) provides details of the number of new permanent residents, countries they are from and which state they settle in. This detail helps us estimate housing demand from new immigrants. We are only interested in the permanent settlers as the temporary arrivals (students, temporary workers and those on working holidays) will need to apply for FIRB approval to buy a property.

We assume two-thirds of permanent Chinese settlers buy a house in their first year of arrival and the remainder rent for the rest of their lives. We assume only one property is purchased and there are three people per household. The national average is 2.5. Furthermore, we assume that the purchase price is the median for the state they settle in. We believe this is conservative as most immigrants settle in the capital cities where property prices are higher.

Through all our analysis of Chinese buyers we add those from Hong Kong as well. Investor demand from Hong Kong is relatively small. For example, there were 18,000 permanent settlers from the mainland in 2012–13 and only 1,600 from Hong Kong.

Companies Mentioned (Price as of 04-Mar-2014)

Adelaide Brighton (ABC.AX, A\$4.19)
Australand (ALZ.AX, A\$3.92)
Boral (BLD.AX, A\$5.66)
CSR (CSR.AX, A\$3.1)
Dulux Group (DLX.AX, A\$5.42)
Fairfax Media (FXJ.AX, A\$0.94)
GWA GROUP Limited (GWA.AX, A\$2.95)
Lend Lease (LLC.AX, A\$11.0)
Mirvac Group (MGR.AX, A\$1.75)
National Australia Bank (NAB.AX, A\$34.78)
REA Group (REA.AX, A\$49.73)
Stockland (SGP.AX, A\$3.92)
Wesfarmers (WES.AX, A\$42.8)
Woolworths (WOW.AX, A\$35.95)

Disclosure Appendix

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