

Planning

The verdict on the Bondi Junction apartments made for high-density family life

In the latest in our series of property reviews, our experts run their eye over a high-rise in Bondi Junction designed for access to transport.

By Julie Power

MARCH 1, 2025



Lisa Natale loves being able to walk everywhere with her two daughters. Lisa and her husband Tom moved into the new block, The Bond, a minute from Bondi Junction, last year. EDWINA PICKLES

Lisa Natale's family bought their new three-bedroom apartment a minute's walk from Bondi Junction station off the plan in 2021, long before their children were born or the unit was completed.

Like many buying their first home, and doing so sight unseen, the Natales felt they were “flying blind” about what they were getting. Moving in to the Capital Corporation’s nine-storey Bond development last April after COVID-related building delays, they were relieved to find the design by architects GroupGSA lived up to the renders.

Buying a home, whether a house or apartment, is most Australians’ biggest investment, and increasingly many buyers are making million-dollar decisions based on plans or a visit to a display house or unit.

The *Herald* has recruited independent architects and other experts to [review apartments](#) nearly or recently completed with an eye to trends, policy, reliability, sustainability, quality, layout and amenities.

Location, location, location ...

Located in one of Sydney’s mostly densely populated suburbs, with 10,000 people a square kilometre, Bond typifies the medium- to high-density housing the NSW government wants to see more of around transport hubs and shopping centres to solve the housing crisis.

Above the facade of the old RSL on Bronte Road, where a new Club Bondi Junction has been built, the [80 units are larger than the minimum sizes recommended in NSW.](#)

Its 33 one-bedroom units, ranging from 55 to 68 square metres, sold for \$850,000 to \$1.15 million off the plan in 2020-21. Two-bedroom units range from 81 to 89 square metres, with three-bedders at 122, and four bedrooms at 178.

A 132-square-metre three-bedroom apartment – similar to that of the Natales, who won’t disclose their purchase price – resold this year for an estimated \$3.1 million.



Capital Corporation director Jim Hunter and GroupGSA associate director Noura Thaha in the rooftop garden that features a movie screen for residents' use. EDWINA PICKLES

Because the views to the north look over the Westfield car park, Capital Corporation director Jim Hunter said they “turned convention on its head”.

They put the most expensive apartments and penthouses to the south, with full-length windows providing views over Centennial and Queens park, towards the airport and the sunset.

Noura Thaha, associate director of architects GroupGSA, said the building included a broad range of typologies, with different-sized apartments. The block's butterfly shape was designed to maximise available sunlight, promote cross ventilation, and frame stunning views across the site and within the apartments.

[The NSW apartment guide](#) recommends that living areas in “at least 70 per cent of apartments” in a building receive a minimum of two hours' direct sunlight between 9am and 3pm at mid-winter. No more than 15 per cent of apartments should be without direct sunlight.

An owner of a south-west facing extra-large four-bedroom unit at Bond said she preferred the southern outlook. “I hate direct light,” Betty (last name withheld) said.

Hunter said a new trend was buyers who wanted big apartments. At Bond, they merged some

two-bedroom apartments to create four-bedroom apartments such as Betty's.



This large four-bedroom apartment at Bond apartments at Bondi Junction by Capital Corporation faces south-west, which suited the owners. EDWINA PICKLES

Hunter said the smaller units to the north were snapped up quickly by investors. They were attracted by the “location, amenity, shopping centres, buses and everything you need”.

Responding to consumer demand, the block was marketed as pet-friendly. Its green rooftop garden, a contrast to the barren rooftops it overlooks, has an outdoor screen for residents to host movie nights.

Choosing an apartment on the south-east corner with outdoor space that would receive direct sun, the Natales moved to the Junction for a shorter commute to the city for Lisa's husband, Tom, and access to public transport, schools and other amenities.

“Having parks close by was definitely a factor in high-rise living with kids,” Lisa said. The delay before they moved gave them time to save for the apartment and children.

It was a big investment in something they hadn't seen. Tom said, “The display unit gives you an idea about what you are buying, but you are uncertain about what the finished project would be like. It is a risk. I've seen that happen [elsewhere].”

Another home buyer, D. Smith, who didn't want her first name published, spent months

researching the purchase of a pram but said choosing a home took a fraction of that time. “Weird, isn’t it? You visit for an hour or two, and then you decide whether to spend millions on a place where you are going to live for years.”



Experts’ view: Lisa King, executive director of the NSW chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects, and David Welsh, a principal of Welsh + Major. EDWINA PICKLES

Where to go for advice

For this review, Lisa King, executive director of the NSW chapter of the Institute of Architects, and David Welsh, principal of Welsh + Major, visited the block.

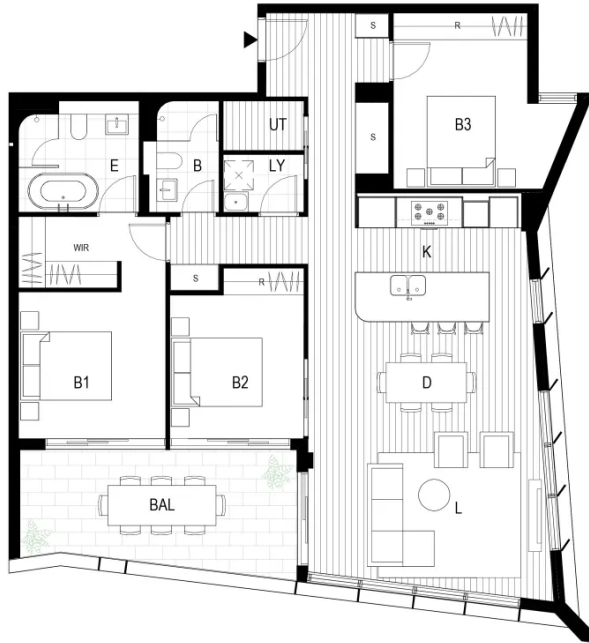
King can tell by looking at a plan whether a room will be dark and stuffy or light and well ventilated, quiet and protected from the noise of the buses, cars, club and shoppers below. (Try opening and closing the windows to see the difference.)

“Architects are invaluable working alongside buyers who are looking at purchasing off-the-plan,” she said.

“They know what the building conditions are – are there cooling breezes? Does hot sun need to be blocked out? Is there warm sunshine in winter?”

The answers to these questions would determine how much you will need to rely on energy costs of heating and cooling your apartment.

She said the cost of asking an architect for advice was insignificant compared with the overall cost of buying a new home or apartment, and they could recommend modifications particular to a buyer's needs. If raised early enough in the process, changes can be accommodated into the building.



BOND
BONDI JUNCTION

3 BED
904
LEVEL 09

INTERNAL	117M ²
EXTERNAL	15M ²
TOTAL	132M ²

GRAY STREET
BRONTE ROAD
EBLEY STREET

B - Bathroom B1 - Bedroom 1 B2 - Bedroom 2 B3 - Bedroom 3 BAL - Balcony D - Dining
E - Ensuite K - Kitchen L - Living LF - Laundry M - Mezz F - Rake
S - Storage UT - Utility WIR - Wardrobe WWC - Wash in Cabin

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0m 1m 2m 5m

Floor plans of a three-bedroom unit at Bond: About a minute's walk from Bondi Junction, the development is an example of the high-density life the NSW government wants to see offered around shopping centres and railway stations. CREDIT: BOND BY CAPITAL CORPORATION.

“If you like to host dinner guests, can you fit an eight-seater dining table? Is there a nook or storage cupboard which can be modified to fit a work-from-home desk? Can storage be added to the plan (we can never have enough storage in apartments!)?”

What Welsh said: Subtle shifts in the line of the facade opened the apartments up for a little more solar and view access. “Skylights to the top-level floors were an effective way to improve amenity towards the back of these apartments. Corner apartments make the most of drawing light from two sides.”

What else to consider

Ask to modify the plan to suit your needs: This is a growing trend, Hunter says.

Consider how easy it is to get in and out: If you are a parent or caring for someone with a disability, or who needs a walker, consider whether the design is accessible. Called universal

design, homes are increasingly being built to be accessible to everyone, regardless of age, disability or other factors.

This author, a parent of twins, thought managing a stroller and shopping – let alone a dog on a leash – in the foyer near the lift would be a juggle and a bit of squeeze.

Have your say: The Office of the Registrar General is looking for feedback on how to improve property laws to make buying off-the-plan more transparent, fair and certain for home buyers, and to simplify the process. [It is consulting the community on whether buyers need additional information](#) about development milestones at the time they sign the contract, as well as the potential introduction of mandatory sunset clauses and penalties for builders who do not meet construction deadlines through inaction.

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