



SUBURB PROFILE



Here to charm

Mermaid Beach is situated in the heart of the Gold Coast and like the rest of the city has changed dramatically in the past 20 years

WORDS HANNAH SBEGHEN

Mermaid Beach features arguably the city's premier street address, Hedges Ave, where multi-million dollar beachfront mansions sit next to small shacks now worth a fortune thanks to massive demand to live in the area.

The area was called Los Angeles Beach until 1946 when it was changed to its current name, derived from the "cutter" Mermaid, which landed on its shores in 1823.

Channelling a relaxed lifestyle away from the hustle and bustle of Surfers Paradise, the area is known for being family-friendly.

Local Councillor Paul Taylor, who has lived in the suburb for the past 37 years, reckons the best part is the stretch of golden sand.

"Mermaid Beach is a very attractive name for a very attractive place," Paul says.

"The cafes, pubs, and of course the beach is very special."

Paul says the renovation of the Pacific Fair Shopping Centre in adjacent Broadbeach is a boon for the area, with world-class shopping just a short walk away for residents.

Professionals Mermaid Beach principal Andrew Henderson describes the suburb as a small area sandwiched between the Gold Coast Highway and a narrow strip of sand.

He says living is split evenly between houses and apartments, and with a lack of land available, old beach cottages are being knocked down and new houses built in their place.

"In the past it was a place for old weekend homes, but now it's becoming a place for permanent residence," Andrew says.

"On Arthur St, three houses are under construction and being upgraded."

Andrew says the suburb is unlike a number of others in that it doesn't have any high-rise towers. However, that is set to change with the new city plan, which came into force in February, raising the height limit in the suburb.

Developers have also lodged plans for a 32-storey tower on the Gold Coast Highway.

Andrew says another aspect of Mermaid Beach is its diverse community.

"It's also laid back compared to areas like

Burleigh, Surfers Paradise and Broadbeach, which are mainly flocked with tourists," Andrew says.

"There's a fair mixture of people living here, from families to younger couples looking for a slice of relaxed beach front residence. The beach is a huge draw card."

Over the past few decades house prices in this area have jumped from under \$100,000 to more than \$1 million.

According to CoreLogic-RP Data, the median house sale price is now \$1.2 million, up 37 per cent in 2015. "With the lack of availability of housing it has significantly pushed the house price up," Andrew says.

The suburb is also known for an increasing array of popular cafes and restaurants. Andrew says it is due to the opening up of liquor licensing in the last couple of years, which encouraged more restaurants to open.

"The Japanese Etsu and Mexican Bonita Bonita are my restaurant hot spots." In a southern pocket of Mermaid Beach is the trendy area of Nobby Beach or "Nobby's" for short by the locals. The area has been transformed in the last few years into a social hub featuring popular restaurants and cafes including Hellenika and Little Beans Cafe.

Main: Mermaid Beach is a popular laid-back suburb
Left: Mermaid Beach Surf Life Saving Club
Centre: Hedges Ave is a popular thoroughfare for cyclists of all ages
Right: One of the many multimillion-dollar homes to be found on the beachfront

Mermaid Beach

The laidback suburb is one of the most in demand areas for people to buy on the Coast

COMMUNITY
Diverse range of people including families and professionals. Nobby Beach precinct is popular with hipsters and while Hedges Ave contains a number of wealthy people, there are still working people who have held onto their properties there for years

LIFESTYLE
The surf clubs and beach are a key focal point for Mermaid Beach residents while there are plenty of top-class bars and restaurants for people to enjoy. Parks provide another place for recreation while key shopping centres are a short drive away

POPULATION

30%

University educated

23%

Professionals

7%

Work in cafes and restaurants

MEDIAN PROPERTY PRICE

HOUSE		UNIT
\$1.2 million	BUY	\$350,000
\$578 (weekly)	RENT	\$385 (weekly)

SERVICES

Parks.....	2
Mermaid Beach Reserve	
Annette Kellerman Park	
Surf clubs.....	2
Mermaid Beach Surf Life Saving Club	
Nobby's Beach Surf Club	
Bars.....	12

DEMOGRAPHICS

Total population

5722

Median household income (\$/weekly)

\$1210

Median age

33

Median mortgage repayments (\$/monthly)

\$2000

Source: CoreLogic RP Data, Census 2011