

Your Home Buyers Guide
Evaluation Report

'It's All In One Place'

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For



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Evaluation Highlights – *'It's All In One Place' Report*

The highlights of the Evaluation of the *Your Home Buyers Guide* are:

1. **Project home buyers liked the Guide and found it very useful:** The Guide has ... *all the info in the one spot.*
 - i. The percentage of customers who responded to the survey found the Guide to be useful was very high (95%)
 - ii. The *Your Home Buyer's Guide* has been very useful to project home buyers, providing new and unbiased information at the right time in their decision making process. The Guide provides efficient and environmentally preferable product choice opportunities to customers. In some cases these are viewed as valuable benefits.
 - iii. The information provided in the Guide has had a great impact on some customers resulting in their needs being re-prioritised to include efficiencies that will benefit them as well as providing environmental impact reduction.
 - iv. The provision of this information has resulted at times in Clarendon being seen in a positive light by customers for including information that is not the usual 'sell'.
 - v. Although a high percentage of respondents to the survey were in the early decision making and research phases of their home purchase (or *steps 1-4* as outlined in the *Your Home Buyer's Guide*), there are still reported cases of considerations being made as a direct result of the Guide, including: choice of location, orientation, better space planning, solar hot water systems, lighting efficiency and other high impact design and product choices. Weaving sustainability messages into straight information about the ten steps for buying a house made the Guide... *not overtly green but...highly strategic.*
2. **The use of education of customers and potential customers to promote increased sustainable awareness and choice was effective.** The Guide is a catalyst, a starting point for pushing the sector forward towards a heightened application of sustainability.
3. **The project partners strongly supported this project** and will continue to do so.
4. **The model used in this project was highly valued.** A private business, obtaining funding from government across the country to support a partnership approach in the building industry is unusual but effective. **The project is strategic, innovative and highly valued.**
5. **Multiple points of distribution of the Guide are effective** but could be better coordinated in the future. There is a continuing role for the Guide in its current form in the market place into the immediate future.
6. **Clarendon Residential staff and their managers were highly supportive** of the Guide. More could be done however within Clarendon Residential to optimise the use of the Guide with all customers and to provide them with more sustainable options and packages. The Guide could be underpinned more strongly by the development of green packages and options, which would raise the Clarendon's business credibility even further.

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Acknowledgements

Well over one hundred and fifty people shared their experiences and thoughts with the evaluators in the development of this report. Their opinions and understandings were vital to this process and the findings would have been much less rigorous without their input. The range and quality of input is acknowledged.

Dr Gabrielle Kuiper gave significant direction and support for the processes used in this evaluation. Her interest in seeing an objective evaluation of the project, which provides both summative information about the effectiveness of the Guide and formative data that points towards future directions, is acknowledged.

About the Title

One of the community respondents to the telephone discussion said that the Guide: *had all the information he needed in one place*. This is a highly telling quote. In order to progress towards a more sustainable future, it is important that people address our sustainability challenges in a thoughtful and considered way and are fully informed about their choices.

1 Introduction and Purpose

Clarendon Residential worked in partnership with a range of Federal and State Government agencies to produce and distribute the *Your Home Buyers Guide*, hereafter called the Guide, to people living within Australia who are considering buying a new project home.

Recent research by Dr Carolyn Hayles at the School of Property, Construction and Project Management at RMIT sets the context in which the Guide sits. This research found that found that: 'Purchasing a home is the most expensive and thus the most important economic decision made by the majority of individuals. With such a crucial decision, the amount of information on the affordability of that purchase, not only the purchase price but also the impact choices may have on running costs and on the environment, is significantly deficient.'¹

Dr Hayles concluded that, 'As the market will not drive sustainability, there is a need to educate the consumer to actually demand sustainability from their homes, and this will only happen if they are given reliable, up-to-date information.'

Funding for this project was provided at the national level by the Australian Greenhouse Office in the Department of Environment and Water Resources (now the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts) and at the state level by the Department of Environment and Climate Change (NSW), Landcom (NSW), Building Commission (Vic), Sustainability Victoria, Queensland Government Environmental Protection Agency, Department for Planning and Infrastructure (WA), Western Australia Planning Commission and Clarendon across Australia.

The Guide is available to potential Clarendon home purchasers through the Clarendon website (as a pdf or by mail request), all Clarendon offices and via sales staff. Various distribution methods have been used by other agencies across Australia. Clarendon has also undertaken a number of in-house initiatives including extensive training of staff and ongoing staff support in the use of the Guide.

This Evaluation Report has been prepared by Helaine Stanley from the Centre for Design at RMIT and Grahame Collier from T Issues Consultancy for Clarendon Homes Residential. Data that informs the Report has been drawn from a range of sources and is organised under an outcomes hierarchy framework. Appendix 1 contains the *Your Home Buyers Guide* Outcomes Hierarchy and Appendix 2 contains information about how data has been obtained to inform the findings and recommendations contained in this report. Essentially evaluation is about making judgements based on evidence and this report takes this approach.

The Evaluation Report is both summative and formative in nature. It captures what has occurred since the launch of the Guide with emphasis on how has it been received - how effective and efficient is it. It is formative in that it identifies recommendations from customers, partners, stakeholders and Clarendon Residential staff about how the Guide, its distribution and use can be improved into the future.

In summary, the objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Determine the extent to which the intended outcomes of the project established at the time of approval of the project, have been achieved to date.
- Identify how the Guide, and its distribution and use can be improved for the future.

The report has been structured in a way that allows the reader to locate the main findings and then to follow through and read the depth of information that supports those findings.

¹¹ *An Examination Of The Relationship Between Sustainability And Affordability In Residential Housing Markets* Dr Carolyn S Hayles School Of Property, Construction And Project Management, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

The Evaluation Highlights are detailed on Page 2, above. These provide a snapshot highlights summary of just what was learned from the evaluation about the progress and impact to date.

Information about the methodology used to identify the data on which this report is based is found in Section 2, Page 6, below and there is more information in Appendix 2.

The detailed findings are found in Section 3, Page 8, below. These have been structured under six headings that group together information about each of the evaluation questions in the Outcomes Hierarchy.

From all of this, some recommendations for the future are identified. These are found in Section 4, Page 24, below.

Note: All quotes from respondents are reported in *italics* in this report – quotation marks are not used.

2 Evaluation Methodology - Brief Overview

Information about the effectiveness and efficiency of the Guide is available in a range of places and the evaluation methodology was designed to draw the data out and use it to make judgements about the Guide. Therefore, in order to evaluate the extent to which the Guide has achieved its intended outcomes, five sources of data were interrogated. Appendix two contains additional information about the methodology, including data collection tools.

1. Customer feedback - on-line and telephone

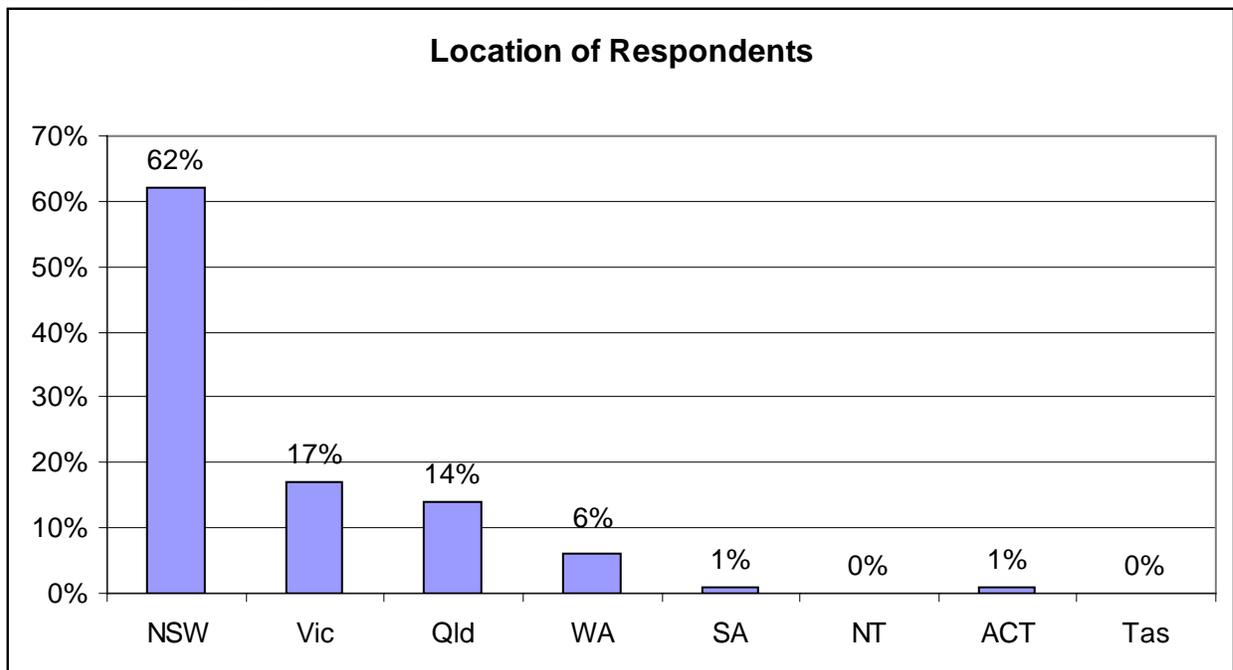
An email was sent to 1015 people who had requested a *Your Home Buyer's Guide* via the Clarendon website asking that they fill in an online survey. Survey Monkey, an online survey tool, was used to provide a user friendly format and useful reporting formats.

There were 122 responses to the emailed online survey link, which was a greater than anticipated response rate (12%). The high response rate, we believe, was due to an appropriate incentive having been offered to prompt immediate action (a \$30 gift voucher to the first 20 people to respond). Responses started coming in within minutes of the survey being sent. The success of this method should be noted for future survey requests.

The data was cleaned to remove those questionnaires where people were referring to a different publication, where this was clear (n = 2). Respondents who had not received the Guide, and therefore were unable to comment on its contents, were also removed (n = 15). The final analysed survey response was 103.

Overall Survey Response
1015 Emails sent
122 Responses
103 (n) Analysed

Respondents were largely from NSW (62%), a 17% were from Victoria and 14% from Queensland.



In addition, a follow-up telephone survey was conducted in order to drill down into the data somewhat. Unfortunately while almost 20% of those who replied to the on-line survey we contacted in order to an interview, only 5% of the overall total responded in depth to the request for a telephone discussion about the Guide. There are a number of reasons for this relatively low level of pick up. Challenges in contacting people at home, lack of any incentive to be involved, and/or some difficulty in identifying what else they could say, would appear to be some of the reasons.

2. Clarendon staff feedback

Three data sources were reviewed:

1. A significant number of staff were involved in training on the Guide [seventy staff in all] and all of the training workshops were evaluated. This information was interrogated to identify staff views about the impact of the Guide.
2. A sample of sales staff in Clarendon's NSW display villages have been surveyed about their use of the Guide post training, and the results were analysed as part of this project.
3. A focus group discussion was held with nine senior Clarendon staff [Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane]. This focus group teased out the extent to which Clarendon has proactively supported the use of the Guide and what might be possible in the future. In order to maintain the integrity of the information received, this group did not include the Sustainability Manager, but she was interviewed separately.

3. Project Partners - telephone interviews

As indicated above a range of partners are involved in this project. Using a discussion guide, feedback was sought from all identified partners by telephone interview.

4. Stakeholders input – survey and telephone interviews

There are also a limited number of other stakeholders and users of the Guide who potentially had input to provide about the uptake of the Guide. A brief electronic survey was used to seek their initial input. The opportunity for a follow-up phone discussion was offered and five telephone interviews were held. Stakeholders included representatives from, councils, a real estate agent, an industry association and building companies who had seen and distributed the Guide.

5. Clarendon project records

Phone and email records held by Clarendon were reviewed. These include material drawn from:

- Information identified during the development of the Guide
- Speeches at launches etc
- Any information available from contractors – informal of formal responses
- Changes in operations/policies etc that may have been impacted upon by the Guide
- Records of distribution of the Guide.

3 Findings

The detailed findings of this evaluation are grouped under six headings. These draw together linked outcomes in the hierarchy in Appendix 1 and relate specifically to each of the evaluation questions in this framework. In general terms, the headings [apart from 3.6] range from the lower end of the hierarchy [immediate outcomes 3.1] to the more complex or ultimate outcomes [3.5]. As was anticipated more data was available to inform the outcomes at the lower end of the hierarchy.

3.1 Production, Marketing & Distribution of the Guide – Strategy and Practice

Findings in this section incorporate information from the following questions in the hierarchy:

- How effectively was the guide produced?
- How appropriately has Clarendon distributed the Guide to customers/potential customers?
- To what extent has effective, relevant training been provided to Clarendon staff about the Guide?
- How effectively has the partnership approach worked? To what extent has the Guide been distributed/marketed by other agencies?

The project is strategic, innovative and highly valued.

Whoever heard of a private company initiating an education partnership like this one with government, at both State and Federal level – and so successfully too. [Key informant]. This quote summarises the highly positive feedback about the strategic approach to partnership in this project. All informants were in accord that this was a hugely positive process. The innovative nature of the approach and the quality of the process used in the development of the Guide were appreciated by all partners in the project.

The strategic approach was timely. Key informants, especially within Clarendon management itself, saw sustainability issues becoming *more top of mind in the community*. *There is an underlying move to more sustainable choices, although money is always an issue.*

Two key informants recalled that they had doubts at the early stages of the project about whether the strategic approach would work. *But it did...I think the Guide is actually being used by some project home buyers to put pressure on us to produce more green options, and that is good.* [Clarendon manager]

In saying this, one of the project partners noted that: *Project home buyers are a tough market and need specific cost sensitive advice.* It is clear that this remains an ongoing challenge for the Guide itself and more particularly for those who use it.

The challenge for the Guide is well expressed in the following quote: *To me it's not enough to understand whether the YHBG has been a successful communication tool; I want to know its commercial implications.* Given that the Guide has only been available for nine months, it is probably premature to expect a definitive response to this issue. Partners and Clarendon Senior Managers have indicated some relevant information in the following quotes:

- *Customers want sustainability options/packages but they are reluctant to pay for it.*
- *The business case is right for this initiative... commercially it can be a winner.*
- *The Guide is a really great tool to 'grab' clients.*
- *Costs for sustainability features are high – we have to work out ways to make them more easily available.*
- *The Guide is educating the market and that can only be positive*

With regard to the strategic approach, Clarendon Senior Managers said that the Guide:

- *Gives Clarendon credibility in the eyes of buyers*
- *Was not a full-on branding exercise - and that was very smart - not a hard sell.*

While this business credibility has not yet been translated into market share, it is not beyond reasonable hope that it will, into the future. But in summary, one Key informant said: *The Guide is a catalyst, a starting point for pushing the sector forward.*

The project partners strongly supported this project and continue to do so

Universally the project partners indicated the highest level of support for the efficiency of this project. This is an important finding because the success of the project could have been put in jeopardy had the innovative partnership model not operated effectively. The following quotes exemplify responses received from both state and national jurisdictions.

...Fantastic at getting the Guide written and out there.

It was really efficient from our point of view. The guide was written well, and quick approval was obtained through our publications process.

This project has worked really well – very efficient and effective.

When taken overall, this project ran very smoothly and it can be argued that this was indicative of the extent to which all partners saw the need for a Guide of this nature. As one partner said: *It was amazing – no one said 'No'. Everyone who was approached saw it as a real need.*

All project partners expressed a high level of satisfaction about the processes used to develop the Guide. They reported that:

- they had sufficient opportunity to comment/provide input into the Guide during the drafting.
- the focus testing process, where input was received from customers and staff, was effective and resulted in an excellent product
- the project did not drag along - it was quick and efficient
- Clarendon staff and the consultants who put the guide together were easy to work with – pleasant and efficient.

Almost everyone is positive about the Guide itself.

The Guide itself also drew positive comments from almost every one of the partners and stakeholders who were interviewed. The following quotes summarise the responses:

- *My sense is that it is well written for the project home buyer - easy to read and use.*
- *Sustainability issues are really well integrated.*
- *The reader is given lots of help in 'how to buy a house'. Sustainability is integrated in a smart way.*
- *Positions the green message well.*

The development process for the Guide was strongly supported by all partners. Content was well developed and user testing was excellent. *There was only one issue of technical substance that required negotiation at the drafting stage.*

The Guide is seen by partners and some stakeholders as setting an industry standard: *It sets a great standard for how we should be trying to keep customers informed.*

In particular there was positive feedback from a range of partners and stakeholders about the checklist and the jurisdiction specific information contained in the back section of the Guide: *The jurisdiction specific information is essential here in Queensland – this needs to be updated regularly* [Key Informant].

Clarendon managers said that the Guide is a: *really great tool to 'grab clients*. They reported that it is a: *great to link it to the steps of buying a project home* and that the*Checklist and local information are really valuable*.

As indicated in more detail below, customers were positive about the Guide, with 95% stating that they liked it.

In the survey, to what degree users were engaging with the material in the Guide was evaluated by asking if they had used the checklists (either in the body of the Guide, at the back of the Guide or both). Of particular interest is feedback from customers about the Checklist, found throughout the Guide and in the back of the Guide as a lift-out. Interesting findings about this material detailed below, found that they were used by the majority of participants

- Of the 77% (n = 79) of respondents to the survey were “still considering” the purchase of their home, 69 of these answered this question and 68% of respondents used some combination of the checklists. A breakdown of the use includes, eighteen respondents (or 26%) answered ‘yes’, (to using the checklists) throughout the Guide, thirteen respondents (19%) answered ‘yes, (to using the checklists) at the back’ and sixteen (23%) answered ‘yes, to both’.
- Of the ‘purchased’ group who answered the question relating to the use of the checklists (n = 17), 83% of respondents used some combination of the checklists. A breakdown of the use includes, nine people (53%) answered ‘yes, to (using the checklists) throughout the Guide, two respondents (12%) answered ‘yes, (to using the checklists) at the back’ and three people (18%) answered ‘yes, to both’.
- As a summary of total responses to the use of the checklists (n = 86), 71% of respondents used the checklists in some form.

There are some people who are not so positive about the Guide.

As might have been expected though, not all responses to the Guide from within the industry were positive. Some people within Clarendon and elsewhere failed to: *Understand or accept the business case for the project... It seemed to push their buttons and they saw sustainability as a threat to sales* [Key informant]. It seemed from the training process within Clarendon that this attitude was more prevalent in one jurisdiction, and in some pockets of staff elsewhere. As can be seen from information contained in Section 3.6 below the pick-up in Queensland appears to be less positive than elsewhere. The notion of the Guide being a: *threat to business* seems more prevalent there.

The level of senior management engagement within Clarendon also varied somewhat and this meant that staff were able to ignore or resist using the Guide. Strong support for the Guide was provided by the Investa Chair, in his letter to staff about the Guide [see Appendix 5], but a more proactive and directive process would assist more comprehensive uptake into the future. It would seem that staff would appreciate much clearer guidelines from senior management about the circumstances in which the Guide should be used directly with customers. This clearer protocol could provide advice about the use of the Guide in various aspects of the business, for example with knock-down rebuild customers, at display villages etc.

In saying all of this, and when taken overall, the response from within Clarendon has been much more positive than negative. *The positive attitude of the sales staff was a real surprise*. [Clarendon Manager]

Multiple points of distribution are effective but could be better coordinated in the future

The multiple points of distribution were seen as a positive for the project by all of the project partners. That people could access the guide from Government agencies, project home builders [most especially, Clarendon], other building information sources, for example Sydney Building Information Centre, Industry Associations and even some real estate agents and builders was seen as a positive. It is an important finding that other building companies have ordered the Guide [for example Cosmopolitan Homes]: *Other builders have put it out there despite the competitive environment in which the project sits.*

While there are positive features in the distribution results, some jurisdictions could approach the distribution in a more proactive manner. Proactive contact with more key points of distribution including, other building companies, the real estate sector, building information centres etc would assist the uptake of sustainability options. This is the responsibility of each of the project partners.

Perhaps though more specific data needs to be kept about who is distributing the Guide and how. As one project partner said: *With regard to distribution no one has their hand on the tiller.* This is a limitation in the model because more could be made of an excellent product. At the base level, this could be sharing information between jurisdictions about distribution mechanisms that are effective.

A limiting feature of this first eight months has been the slowness in getting the Buyers Guide website up and functional. This was a responsibility undertaken by the Department of Environment Water Heritage and the Arts. The Guide was only placed on the website in June 2008, eight months after its launch in NSW.

Another limiting factor was the failure to organise a formal launch of the Guide in Victoria. This is a key marketing strategy and the success of launches in NSW and WA particularly demonstrates the importance of this part of the distribution strategy.

Clarendon Residential staff were generally highly supportive of the Guide.

A brief report on Clarendon staff feedback gained through the training process.

Clarendon Residential offered significant staff training to support the use of the Guide. A brief outline of the training is provided at Appendix 3 and detailed evaluation reports on each training workshop are available from Clarendon. Much of the training occurred prior to the release of the Guide and was designed to prepare staff to use it appropriately. The following table indicates the numbers who were trained, pre and post release of the Guide.

Training Offered	Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane
Pre release of the Guide; 2007	Twenty seven staff. Modules 1 and 2/3 as appropriate	Nil (note the Clarendon business was relaunching in Victoria at this time)	Fifteen staff. Module 1 only
Post release of the Guide; 2008	Twenty two Staff. Module 1 only	Six staff – Modules 1 and 2	nil

This report does not contain information about the training per se. It collects and analyses staff perceptions about the Guide itself that were provided within the evaluation of the workshops.

Key findings are:

- Almost all participants were positive about the Guide itself. There was a very positive response to the overall intent of the Guide and to Clarendon's role in putting the Guide together. This was even more evident in Melbourne than with staff in other jurisdictions. No-one raised any negative feedback about

the fact that the Guide was in distribution. *Love the Guide..... feeling more confident to be able to compare Clarendon to another home company*

- The staff were reasonably well informed about broad sustainability issues, in that most understood the concept of water and energy use reduction and the need for a star rating [or equivalent system for new homes even prior to looking at the Guide]. Often though this awareness did not necessarily translate into actions that encouraged purchasers to consider sustainable features. This was particularly the case if staff believed that promoting sustainable choices would negatively impact upon the possibility of a sale. Following the training experience, the vast majority of staff were strongly supportive of Clarendon's approach to this issue. The level of staff awareness of sustainability options and features was encouraging – the challenge now though is translating this into a more proactive and informed approach with customers every time.
- The one sticking point for staff was that they needed to be convinced that use of the Guide with individual customers would not impact negatively on their sales.
- Significantly, staff indicated that they found the Guide to be useful in a proactive way with some customers and that they felt confident about their capacity to use the Guide. There appeared to be a movement in the level of comfort throughout the workshop series, with confidence increasing over time. It was clear from the training process that staff felt they could use the Guide with their clients. All those who completed module 2 or 3 felt confident about their capacity to use the Guide or to respond to it, if their customers raise areas of content. *The future buyers will be well informed and the Guide gives us a better insight.*
- Staff appreciated the effort that had gone into drafting and production, as well as the training. The following quotes illustrate these perspectives:
 - *It is an attractive booklet*
 - *Gives us an insight into the brochure [sic Guide] before we get blindsided without first seeing it.*
 - *We have an overview of the guide and have discussed (positively).*
 - *Resource in one booklet, so you know where to get information.*
- A strong view was expressed that staff needed the establishment of internal processes and systems so that they have access to technical information related to the issues raised in the Guide as they require it. There is a need to appear technically competent in front of clients and so staff suggested that Clarendon should establish an on-line question and answer system, so that they can find the answers to questions that they don't know. Some quotes below illustrate this:
 - *It would help if we knew all clients who signed contracts read this guide*
 - *More information for both my clients and myself*
 - *Gives us another tool to use to help us effectively deal with clients – but I need to know more.*
- It must be noted that there is some doubt about how often the Guide is being used proactively by all Clarendon staff with customers. Essentially this is not a problem with the Guide itself but with issues like cost and budget. Staff expressed very mixed views about the circumstances in which they might raise issues proactively with clients. Issues of time and budget seemed to be the major concerns. Despite the training and the positive attitudes expressed by staff, the Guide may be left on the shelf at times, because staff are not willing to raise any issue that may impact on the sales process. If they see even the smallest potential risk in the information that the Guide contains, they will not show it to

customers. Given the nature of the sales process this aversion to risk is understandable but perhaps it is somewhat short sighted. There is an opportunity for the Guide to form a significant part of the Clarendon sales process, however unless this is strongly promoted – or even mandated by management, this is unlikely to occur.

A brief report on Clarendon staff input received post training.

In early 2008, after the 2007 training workshop a brief survey was sent to NSW staff who had been involved in the training. Eleven responses were received or 41% of the total possible number of responses. In summary the following feedback was provided about the Guide:

- One staff respondent found the Guide 'Very Useful'; eight found it 'Useful' and two found it 'Not Very Useful'. Of the two in the latter group, both were developments salespeople, one had not used the Guide at all and both made no comment to substantiate their views.
- Those staff members who found the Guide useful did so for the following reasons, as indicated by quotes from their responses:
 - *Simple to understand*
 - *Heightens client awareness of requirements of BASIX. Answers questions of interest. Saves time*
 - *Helps to explain a very complex topic to customers in their own time and language*
 - *Great that it links to steps in purchasing process*
 - *A lot of information in a concise form for customers*
- Those staff who had used the Guide with customers found it most useful:
 - *when clients are just starting out – as a reference and checklist for clients to take home*
 - *to introduce elements of the design process; that is, window positions and solar aspects*
 - *with clients who are really interested in the environment.*
- A major issue for some staff who provided feedback was the fact that the Guide raised expectations. The following quotes illustrate this and indicate that Clarendon needs to provide a clear response to its staff about these issues:
 - *People who see the Guide expect a lot of Clarendon*
 - *Clients expect to utilise these ideas for no extra charge*
 - *It would be good to have a flow chart of BASIX questions and answers.*
- Staff were concerned about the size of the Guide: *The size [above A4] is an ongoing hassle.*

3.2 Consumer Environmental Awareness

Findings in the Section incorporate information from the following questions in the hierarchy

- Does there appear to be an increase in the general awareness of buyers [and potential buyers] over the past twelve months?

There has been an increased level of awareness in sustainability among prospective home buyers

Clearly those partners who were involved in the project saw that the community was ready for such a product, indeed some partners indicated that the community was requesting it.

Some important comments were made about this issue by project partners. All partners indicated that there was a high and increasing level of awareness about sustainability in the community. In the main it was reported that this was driven by the current focus on climate change and water availability. There was increasing and highly visible interest in the issues related to sustainability in the press.

Increase in awareness is driven by water restrictions – hence water saving options and subsidies are important focuses for the Guide.

This finding is validated by research conducted in various States and Territories and nationally. For example: the *NSW Who cares about the environment study, 2006 and 2007 update*, see:

<p>DECC <i>Who Cares about the Environment in 2006?</i> Main report</p>	<p><u>Quantitative survey</u> with latest data on some relevant air quality questions. <u>Qualitative research</u> component includes relevant insights including nature of different community segments and implications.</p>	<p>Main report hardcopy and www.environment.nsw.gov.au/community/whocares2006.htm</p>
<p>DECC <i>Who Cares about Water and Climate Change in 2007?</i> Main report</p>	<p><u>Quantitative survey</u>, follow-up to 2006.</p>	<p>www.environment.nsw.gov.au/community/Whocares2007.htm</p>

In general all partners and stakeholders reported that there is an: *Increasing interest in sustainability.*

There are barriers in the way of project home buyers to making sustainable choices

Unfortunately there was very little data available from the customers beyond a raw response about the issue of budget availability, about what constituted the main barriers to purchasing sustainable products/homes. The limited response to the telephone survey meant that this issue was not drilled down into sufficiently to make in depth analysis possible. Hence the following information is provided, but its limitations are acknowledged.

Major barriers identified are:

Money and budgets – In both the telephone and on-line surveys all customers who commented on the issue of barriers highlighted the relative costs of sustainability features. The major barrier was the perceived cost of the options flagged in the guide. Often though, customers had little real knowledge of real costs and they seemed not to understand the concept of ‘pay back period’ at all well. So at times the dollar barrier might well have been a perceived barrier as much as a real one. There needs to be more research undertaken to test out this hypothesis.

Lack of informed advice - One telling quote from a telephone respondent fleshes out the concept of barriers: *Encountered many difficulties trying to make enviro changes. Felt that Clarendon had little to no understanding of environment. They didn't understand why he wanted to move the windows. I wanted to put a skylight in to light a central area and they wouldn't allow it. I also wanted to put in an instantaneous water heater on the pipes to eliminate hot water wastage, but couldn't find a builder willing to install the system for him.* This customer reported that he didn't mind spending the money, but couldn't get someone to install it. The issue here is how well Clarendon staff can assist customers to overcome some of the perceived barriers.

Balance between cost and desire: The balance between cost and desire is also really important for most home buyers. As one respondent in the phone survey stated: *If I can afford it, I plan to put in tinted glass in certain areas of the house.*

3.3 Consumer/Stakeholder response to the Your Home Buyer's Guide

Findings in the Section incorporate information from the following question in the hierarchy:

- Did the buyers like the Guide?

Home buyers and those in the market for a new home found the guide very useful.

The guide helped ascertain what type of home may best be suited for myself and my family's needs. Highlighted to me some pros and cons of extras and features which may and maynot be useful. Important steps leading up to the building process highlighted, and what I may come up against. Generally helpfull and useful guide. [Customer telephone interview]

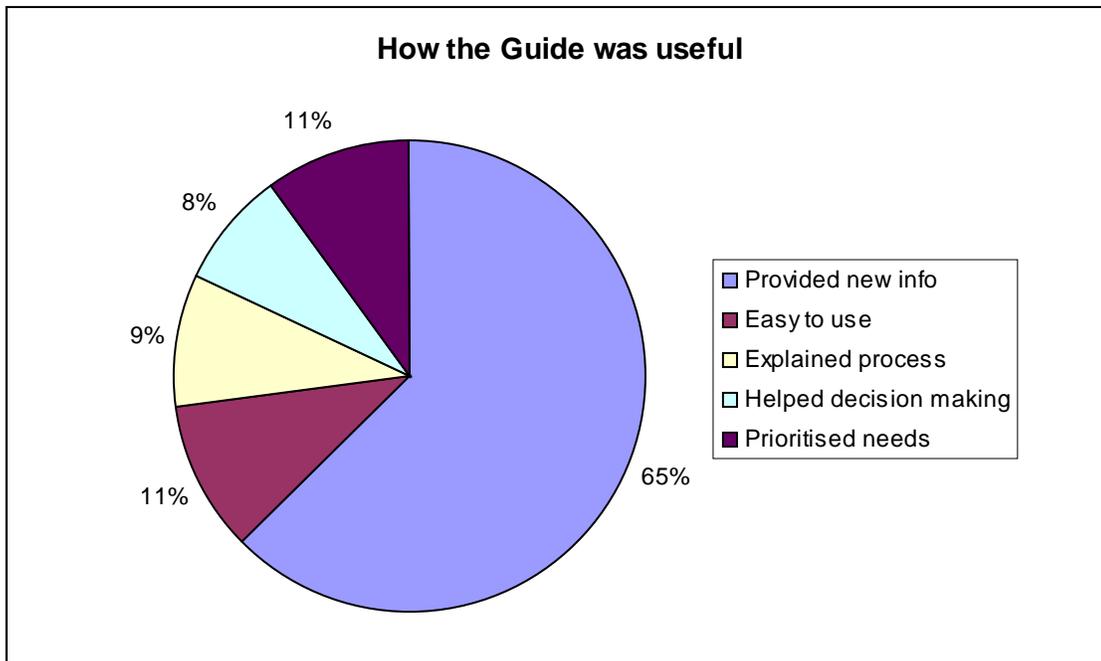
There was a general and positive response by partners/stakeholders about whether the buyers liked the Guide. These are best summarised by the following quotes:

The people I spoke to that have an interest in the industry thought the Guide was great. There was a positive initial response from customers – 'Yeah this is helpful.'

To further illustrate this point one building industry stakeholder said: *It is exactly what is required to help home buyers understand the basic elements of energy efficiency and the relevance of them to their comfort and ongoing costs.*

The customers themselves reported very positive responses to the Guide. The percentage of respondents who found the Guide to be useful was very high, 95% (n = 98) with only 5% (n = 5) of respondents answering 'No' to the question: 'Did you find the Your Home Buyer's Guide useful to you?'

From the 98 people who responded 'Yes' to the 'useful' question, most (n = 95) people answered the open-ended question to describe how the Guide was useful. As some respondents made reference to multiple aspects of the Guide in their description. In the main people indicated the general response - provided new information and another more specific response. It should be noted that these responses have been analysed by the number of instances rather than by the number of respondents. The data was categorised by grouping responses into broad themes (presented in the graph below).



Most responses indicated that the Guide provided respondents with new information, although prioritising needs and ease of use were also among aspects mentioned.

Some examples of the comments from respondents include:

- *The Guide gave me the depth of the information (everything I should know prior to purchasing/building a house).*
- *Lot's (sic?) of details which I hadn't previously considered.*
- *All the info in the one spot - unbiased.*

Only 5% of respondents felt the Guide was not useful to them. Comments related to hidden costs and added extras information not being covered enough. Others wanted more detail as they had a specific information needs the Guide did not cover.

Many of the responses to the question, 'What did you do differently (if anything) as a result of reading the Guide?' also referred to the process or information. With 12 instances where people quoted 'more informed', 12 instances where people mentioned being 'careful/aware' and 11 instances where the Guide was used 'for exploration research'. In addition, ten people indicated that they did nothing different but found the guide an information source. *It gave some excellent suggestions of things to consider when building a house... some 'obvious' things, some that you don't readily think of.*

As 77% (n = 79) of respondents were 'still considering' regarding the purchase of their home, many would be in the information gathering and evaluation stages. The results of the survey show the Guide has been very successful in satisfying and enriching the information needs of the project home market. From these findings, the Guide appears to have been extremely successful in providing valuable information to assist customers with Steps 1-4 of the *10 Steps to your new home*, as outlined in the *Your Home Buyer's Guide*, particularly:

- *Gave us a good overall idea of what's involved and what to look for that suits us.*

The documented barriers are limited due to the fact that most customers surveyed were at the early purchase stage. More research would be required, as a follow on project, to document and report on barriers in a more

comprehensive manner. More rigorous data would be available once the survey sample had moved further along the purchase spectrum and the Guide has been in the market place for a longer period of time.

3.4 Consumer adoption of sustainable initiatives & products

Findings in the Section incorporate information from the following questions in the hierarchy

- Is there any evidence of improved self-reported sustainability behaviour on the part of home purchasers as a result of the Guide?²
- Is there evidence of adoption and use of sustainability related technology as a result of the Guide?
- To what extent is there evidence of increase selection of sustainability features, design and inclusions?

It is clear that the Guide has had a significant impact on home buyers and potential buyers. The following quote summarises its impact: *We are new to home buying and it helped us understand the many things that we hadn't thought about ourselves*

The following information details this impact

The Guide had an impact on those in the process of buying a home and those still considering purchasing a project home

As 77% (n = 79) of respondents were 'still considering', the full effectiveness and influence of the Guide in the later Steps 7-9 of the *10 steps to your new home* can't be fully evaluated. Twenty three percent of respondents had 'purchased' their home and had progressed through all ten steps. The Guide has been effective in converting the information into revised prioritisation of needs and design and product choice in some cases.

The results of the Guide converting some respondents to act upon their new information and make design and product choices based on this new information are extremely positive as seen by the 39 (n = 69) respondents who are 'considering making changes to the design of (their) home' and 6 (16%) respondents who actually 'made changes to the design of (their) home as a result of reading the Guide'.

Buyers and potential buyers changed their choices as a result of reading the Guide

Overall the majority of people felt that they would do something differently after reading the Guide. Most commented on their increased knowledge and confidence and their revised approach and some mentioned specific design and product choices. The range of responses varied significantly from one person to another. Seventy nine respondents answered the question 'what did you do differently (if anything) as a result of reading the Guide?' Responses varied; twenty nine people [37%] said they had done 'done nothing different'. But the other 63% of the sample of seventy nine people indicated that they had made changes. While only two people [unprompted] described the changes they had made in terms of 'sustainability', it is clear that project home buyers do not equate their actions with the word 'sustainability'. This concept and its label remain difficult for people to understand. But that does not mean that they are not making sustainable choices – they just call them something else.

People who made changes said that they were more informed [twelve people], more carefully aware [twelve people], did more research [eleven people] or make more informed choices [twelve people]. In addition, a few rethought their budget [3 people] and others [10 people] used the guide as an information source.

² Note there is unlikely to be significant evidence but this question must be canvassed because the objective of the program at the time of inception

Comments related to the changes that people made, included:

- *Take my time in looking at all options*
- *I bought a house with my head and not my heart*
- *Felt more confident in my search and choice*

Another theme that came out of responses included reprioritising or changing needs. For example, one person wrote:

Made a list of needs, want and the must haves. Your Guide made it clear that not everything would be exactly what I want but it has allowed me to make a list of what I need and what I can afford

Although many people related this question to the process of purchasing a home, some respondents listed specific environmental improvements:

- Efficiencies and saving on bills (2)
- Better space planning (2)
- Importance of location (1)
- Orientation of home (1)
- Rain water tank (1)
- Wind power (1)
- Passive solar (1)

The Guide had an impact on design changes/choices

One telephone interviewee said: *it's really useful for people who are new to building homes, gives an idea about choices - everything what we need to look at while building house and also gives an idea of different options.*

The information below indicates the impact of the Guide on people who are 'still considering' home purchase and those who have purchased a home.

'Still Considering' Group

The following design changes as a result of the Guide from respondents who have not yet purchased their home/'still considering' in response to the survey question: 'Are you considering making changes to the design of your home? If you are, please tell us what changes you plan to make'. Of the 69 respondents who answered this question, 39 (57%) were considering making changes to the design of their home.

'Still considering' group	Yes	No	Blank	Total
Are you considering making changes to the design of your home? 69 people responded to this question	39 respondents or 57% of those who responded.	30 respondents or 43 % of those who responded.	10 respondents.	79 respondents in all.

The types of changes mentioned by respondents who were 'still considering', the purchase of their home, primarily related to the design and planning of space including an even spread of different, efficient and more space – it is noted that in some instances this included adding an additional bathroom.

Comments include:

- *Yes, additional walls and moving a few rooms around to suit our lifestyle.*
- *Yes, but nothing major- mainly changes to make the house more liveable for us in the time we're here- eg. Closing in half of our DLUG [Double Lock-up Garage] to create a kids playroom.*
- *Yes, extra bathroom.*

Other design change mentioned related to environmentally preferable design improvements and product inclusions including; (all single mentions) efficiency, energy rating, north facing aspect, solar power, solar hot water, materials choice, bamboo flooring, zoning (extra doors), window placement, passive solar and environmentally friendly.

'Purchased a Home' Group

The following design changes as a result of the Guide- from respondents who have purchased their home in response to the survey question: 'Did you make any changes to your home design as a result of reading the Guide?' Of the 16 respondents who answered this question, 6 (38%) reported making changes to the design of their home. It is of note that some respondents found it difficult to separate 'design' changes and quoted product inclusions. Answers relating to product inclusions will be reported in the product section below.

'Purchased a Home' Group	Yes	No	Blank	Total
Did you make any changes to your home design as a result of reading the Guide?	6 respondents or 38% of those who responded.	10 respondents or 63% of those who responded.	8 respondents.	24 respondents.

The changes made [as reported by on-line and phone survey customers] included:

- *Environmentally friendlier design*
- *Roof tiles, bricks and water tank*
- *Location and position of windows, double insulation of the roof, gas water heater, reverse cycle airconditioning etc.*
- *Changed the living room to the front of the house*
- *Made changes to the living room windows and lighting, kitchen and upstairs rumpus room*

The Guide had an impact on product choice

Similarly the Guide had some impact on product choice for the two groups discusses above.

'Still Considering' Group

The Guide had an impact on choice of product inclusions of twelve respondents who have not yet purchased their home according to their responses to the survey question: 'Did you include or choose any products based on what you read in the Guide?' The twelve respondents cited changes to product inclusions. These included high performing materials and fittings, solar products, kitchen upgrade, hot water service, solar hot water, heating, extra sound insulation in home theatre, insulation in roof and external walls, third garage, bathroom, kitchen and flooring options, less glass, bamboo flooring, air conditioning, better doors and kitchen appliances.

Still Considering Group	Yes	No	Blank	Total
Did you include or choose any products based on what you read in the Guide?	12 respondents or 18% of those who responded.	56 respondents or 82% of those who responded.	11 respondents.	79 respondents.

'Purchased a Home' Group

Only a few people who had purchased a home made choices about product inclusions as a result of using the Guide in response to the survey question: 'Did you include or choose any products based on what you read in the Guide?' The three respondents reported on product inclusions including the choice of roof tiles, a hot water system, colours, appliances and look and feel of the home and a kitchen upgrade. However, as noted above, other items reported in the 'design' related question included windows, lighting, roof tiles, bricks, water tank, insulation of roof, gas water heater and a reverse cycle air conditioner.

'Purchased a Home' Group	Yes	No	Blank	Total
Did you include or choose any products based on what you read in the Guide?	3 respondents or 19% of those who responded.	13 respondents or 91% of those who responded.	8 respondents.	24 respondents.

Not only did the Guide have an impact on readers decision making, but as one customer indicated, it became a source document and was used over time: *I kept checking back and reading things in the book to see if i was right.* This quote indicates that while a minority of respondents indicated they were choosing products on the basis of information in the Guide, further research is needed to fully understand how the Guide is being used by customers.

3.5 The Future and the Guide

Findings in the Section incorporate information from the following question in the hierarchy:

- How can the Guide benefit Clarendon more? What are the opportunities for Clarendon's business

Project partners are very positive about Clarendon's role as a sustainability market leader because of their work in this project. All project partners reported that this perception will become an even stronger reality over time should work continue in this area. Some partners were clear though that the Guide needed to be supported by more visible green options, so that buyers engaged by the Guide can be engaged in real sustainability choices about their home. This would correct the view that there is: *Somewhat of a disconnect between perception and reality.* That is that there is clearly a high degree of interest in sustainability and desire to make more sustainable choices, but that this does not always translate into building choices.

- *The Guide pushed us forward.... The next step is visible cost effective choice.*

While it is reported above that most home buyers liked the guide 5% of respondents felt the Guide was not useful to them. Comments that were made by these people might help to inform changes to the guide for the

future. In the main they said that while information was provided, it was too general and that there were hidden costs and added extras that were not made clear. On balance, these respondents wanted more detail, which could be read as they had specific information needs that the Guide did not cover

There were some requests from customers for pricing of sustainability options to be included in the Guide. It is acknowledged however that these differ between jurisdictions and would need to be kept up to date. If this suggestion is to be taken up it would clearly be through the use of another local insert.

One stakeholder said that *it would be a mistake to broaden its appeal. It is kept clear and simple by concentrating on buyers of project homes. A different booklet should be produced for custom designed homes.*

Other comments included reinforcing the helpfulness of the Guide, more information on the full cost of a home and a few positive comments on Clarendon's homes, website and service.

- *Useful step by step tool. Would be nice to have ideas of costs involved in changing things, e.g. extra wall, bifold doors, crime safe screens, alfresco area includes extension of roof...*
- *We found the guide very informative and yet the checklists made it very helpful and concise. Thanks for the guide.*
- *Simply love Clarendon homes!!!! Wish they would build split level homes in Victoria*
- *I found Clarendon's web site the best of all that we have looked at and the diversity of plans in both design and price range is excellent.*
- *I will be buying a Clarendon Home within the next 12 months through knockdown rebuild as we have found them to have fantastic customer service and the features we want.*

One customer who was telephone interviewed summed up the general feelings in this way: *I get the feeling that Clarendon is doing better than others in addressing environmental issues.*

Clearly the Guide is seen by consumers, stakeholders, partners and Clarendon staff and management as a win for the business, but in some ways Clarendon Residential has missed the boat a little. There is a strongly expressed need to develop sustainability packages to assist customers to make more informed and supported choices. Other building companies are now offering these and information is not sufficient. Packages could be small and specific – eg double glazing or/ or larger and more comprehensive. *These will make it easier for customers to chose – to turn their desires for sustainability into actions.* Making specific recommendations about packages is beyond the terms of reference of this evaluation project - it is clear however, that the Guide has opened a number of doors that need to be walked through. Clarendon Residential has a significant opportunity to improve its credentials, improve its commercial bottom line and support more sustainable choice.

With regard to this future scenario it is noted that comments were received from respondents about the following issues:

- Information about 'marketing packs for green options' should be included in the Guide in future editions.
- Clarendon in Victoria is currently developing packages and costed options packs
- There is a need to review standard specifications and make them consistent if possible.

Specific feedback about Guide content, for review

Page 12: The information in the table on Water efficiency needs to be checked against Australian and NZ

standards

There was some concern expressed about the suitability of the pictures used in the Guide, in that they were seen as being *too NSW* by some people.

One respondent said that the technical information needed to be checked and updated annually because of the rate of change related to sustainability at this time.

A number of people expressed concern that the Guide was larger than A4 in size and so is unusual and somewhat difficult to post/ One other Clarendon respondent said that the boxes containing the Guide were too heavy to move around.

3.6 Jurisdiction Specific Issues

Findings in this section do not relate to specific questions in the hierarchy but are drawn from input provided as part of the evaluation from each jurisdiction

Overall Clarendon issues

The success of this project may have come as somewhat of a surprise to Clarendon Residential and even to some of the project partners. In this regard Clarendon managers said that the Guide

- *Is great for our credibility*
- *Gives Clarendon credibility in the eyes of buyers*
- *Was not a full-on branding exercise- and that was very smart- not a hard sell*
- *Really great tool to 'grab clients*
- *Great to link it to the steps of buying a project home*
- *Checklist and local information are really valuable.*

As indicated above however there is a clear need for action to back-up this positive beginning nationally and in each state branch, with significant options packages and other initiatives.

Issues in Victoria

- No Victorian launch was an issue that impacted on marketing and distribution processes. Some respondents are still interested in launching the Guide in Victoria
- The Guide needs more inserts about the local situation and choices to make it even more relevant in Victoria
- The Guide is web available through a range of organisations and this is viewed as a positive distribution and marketing approach
- Multiple source distribution works for a product like this. Building companies are an important source but broader distribution processes are essential.

Issues: Western Australia

- Good support for launch of the Guide in WA. Ministerial Launch was very successful and the WA Department of Planning and Infrastructure were overrun with requests for the guide in the early period after the launch.
- The Guide is heavily supported in Western Australia.

Issues: New South Wales

- The NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change has proactively distributed the Guide, as has Landcom. Until recently the Guide was featured on the front page of Landcom's website. Distribution also occurred very actively through the Sydney Building Information Centre and other outlets, prompted by the DECC.
- There is evidence of a broad ranging distribution strategy in NSW and between DECC, Landcom and Clarendon there is a high level of visibility of the Guide in NSW

Issues: Queensland

- Lower sustainability building standards [three and a half star system only] meant that the Guide is pitched, *before its time a little in Queensland*. Clarendon staff only engaged in one training session, and then somewhat reluctantly, especially at the management level. The tendency was towards continual reflection on the: *'Why do we have to have this?'* issue.
- In Queensland the EPA and Lend Lease have undertaken a consumer survey and found that cost is still the major issue impacting on sustainable choices. *What would you give up is the issue?*

Issues: Tasmania, South Australia and the Territories

- This report lacks information from South Australia and Tasmania or the two territories because agencies in these jurisdictions were not partners in the project. This is because:
 - There is a only a small project home market in these jurisdictions
 - In addition, the new homes market is also very small, especially in South Australia and Tasmania.

4 Recommendations

Given that this evaluation is formative in nature, a series of recommendations for future activity are drawn from the findings above and the information provided by all informants. These recommendations are based upon the success of the Guide during its short life to date.

It is recommended that:

1. A copy of this report is provided to Clarendon Residential management and to program partners.
2. The success of this project is documented by Clarendon and its program partners as one of a range of models for the future in moving toward more sustainable business. It should be recognised that this project has brought wins for Clarendon and wins for the project partners. Most importantly though the environment has also benefitted.
3. This project continues into the future with a reprint of the Guide produced as soon as possible to meet current demand and a new addition produced by the time that the current edition has been in the market place for approximately two years. Until that time the use of inserts is strongly recommended so that updated information can be included – the sustainable building field is changing quickly and print material can become out of date much sooner than was previously the case.
4. The new edition of the Guide includes a section on 'healthy living/sustainable living once you are in your home'. This would cover issues like: Smart heating and cooling tips, transport options, saving money by managing your home better etc. This material is urgently needed and could be a new section of the Guide or provided as a stand alone product for all owners prior to moving into a new home. This latter option is perhaps preferable as the Guide itself focuses on building choices and is used earlier in the purchase process.
5. Into the future, other program partners are identified and approached for involvement in this project. Banks and other lending institutions are a possible partner group for the future - especially those offering green loans. The real estate sector through the Real Estate Institute of Australia may also worthy of further consideration for two reasons. They have contact with people who are considering choice of a home and there has been some interest in the Guide from individual agents. While this might not be a first order recommendation it is worthy of follow-up.
6. While there are positive features in the distribution results, some jurisdictions could approach the distribution in a more proactive manner. Each of the partners should make direct contact with more key points of distribution including, building companies other than Clarendon Residential, the real estate sector, building information centres and perhaps through selected organisations in the non-Government sector. It is recommended that into the future partners agree on the minimum requirements of the distribution process and keep each other informed about the level of uptake on an annual basis.
7. More work occurs on understanding the barriers to sustainable choice in the housing sector. This report only scratches the surface of what these barriers are and offers no advice about how they might be overcome.
8. Within Clarendon Residential itself a number of steps are taken to enhance the company's sustainability profile and the delivery of sustainable options. These include:
 - A clear protocol about the use of the Guide by Clarendon Residential sales and contract staff. This should ensure that all potential home buyers are provided with the Guide and that it forms the basis for a discussion about sustainability features between sales staff and every customer.
 - Provision of a system for supporting staff to obtain the technical information that they require to advise customers about sustainability options.

- Inform customers more directly about the concept of pay back period on sustainability choices.
- Development of a clear business case and subsequent business plan for the next steps for growing sustainability as a key feature of the Clarendon core practices.
- The development and marketing of appropriate Green Packages in all States and marketing of these as inserts into the Guide. Green product options that could tie in to the key steps and advice provided in the Guide. Structure packs around market drivers i.e. efficient, healthy and comfortable and green.
- Continuation of Clarendon staff training about the guide and sustainability for new sales staff and for those in jurisdictions where training has not been completed.

Appendix 1

In line with the Program Logic framework³ for the evaluation of programs, these have been organised into a hierarchy in the table below. Appropriate evaluation questions have been developed for each outcome and information about who has the information and how we locate it are also included in the table.

Outcome Read hierarchy from the bottom up	Evaluation question relevant to each outcome	Who has the information about this outcome?	How do we get the information about this outcome?
Increased demand for sustainable housing	How can the Guide benefit Clarendon more? What are the opportunities for Clarendon's business	Clarendon management/Investa Sustainability GM	Focus group Interview with Investa Sustainability GM
Adoption and use of technology and improved behaviour that impact on sustainability	Is there any evidence of improved self-reported sustainability behaviour on the part of home purchasers as a result of the Guide? ⁴ Is there evidence of adoption and use of sustainability related technology as a result of the Guide?	Customers Clarendon staff	Customer survey Clarendon staff input Note: it is unlikely that there will be direct evidence of change at this level
Increased selection of more sustainable features design and inclusions	To what extent is there evidence of increase selection of sustainability features, design and inclusions?	Stakeholders Project Partners Clarendon Staff Clarendon Management	Customer Clarendon staff Stakeholder feedback
Increased buyer awareness of the benefits of sustainable housing at the point of sale	Did Buyers like the Guide? Does there appear to be an increase in the general awareness of buyers [and potential buyers] over the past twelve months?	Stakeholders Project Partners Clarendon Staff Clarendon Management	Stakeholder feedback Clarendon staff feedback

³ Funnell S. (1997): *Program Logic: An Adaptable Tool for Designing and Evaluating Programs* in Evaluation News and Comment, Vol 6, number 1, July 1997, Australasian Evaluation Society, ACT.

Guba, E.G & Lincoln, Y.S. (1989) *Fourth Generation Evaluation* Sage: Thousand Oaks Publishing

Owen J. with Rogers P: *Program Evaluation (1999): Forms and Approaches* 2nd Edition, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards NSW.

⁴ Note there is unlikely to be significant evidence but this question must be canvassed because the objective of the program at the time of inception

Outcome Read hierarchy from the bottom up	Evaluation question relevant to each outcome	Who has the information about this outcome?	How do we get the information about this outcome?
Willingness, knowledge and confidence gained by Clarendon staff to effectively distribute and support the Guide.	How appropriately has Clarendon distributed the Guide to customers/potential customers? To what extent has effective, relevant training been provided to Clarendon staff about the Guide?	Clarendon files T Issues Consultancy Reports by Clarendon staff Clarendon Management	Review Clarendon files Clarendon Sustainability Manager Review aggregation and analysis of evaluation reports on training workshops
Satisfactory delivery and management of the Guide by partners	How effectively was the guide produced? How effectively has the partnership approach worked, To what extent has the Guide been distributed/ marketed by other agencies?	As can be identified from the funding bodies	Funding bodies and Clarendon Sustainability Manager

Appendix 2. Sources of Data

The hierarchy outlined in Appendix 1 above indicates that data would be drawn from a number of sources to inform the findings of this Report. This appendix indicates who was contacted and the tool that was used to generate the data.

A. Overview

Customer On-line Survey: See survey below

Customer phone discussion: See discussion guide below

Program Partners: Phone Interviews

Telephone interviews of varying length from fifteen minutes to well over thirty minutes we held with ten representatives of the following program partners. A discussion guide was developed to assist this process see below.

- DECC NSW
- Landcom NSW
- DEWHA (formerly AGO)
- Building Commission Victoria
- Sustainability Victoria
- Environmental Protection Agency Queensland
- Department of Planning and Infrastructure WA
- Western Australian Planning Commission

Stakeholder Phone interview/email

Input received from eight stakeholders from NSW, WA and Queensland. Most of these respondents were involved in distribution of the YHBG.

Clarendon Management Focus Group

Nine senior managers from NSW, WA, Queensland and Victoria. Focus group and individual interviews

Review of Program Documentation and Clarendon staff Training Evaluation Reports

Key Informant interviews

Two other key informants were interviewed including the project manager.

B. Data Collection Tools

B1 On-line survey

Introduction	
1. Which state do you currently live in?	
2. Did you find the Your Home Buyers' Guide useful to you?	
If you answered "yes", how was the Guide useful to you?	
If you answered "no", how could it have been made useful to you?	
3. What did you do differently (if anything) as a result of reading the Guide?	
4. Since the time you read the Guide, are you still considering buying or have you purchased a new project home?	
Section: Still considering buying a new home	Section: New home purchasers
5. Are you considering making changes to the design of your home? If you are, please tell us what changes you plan to make.	5. Who did you purchase your home from?
6. Did you include or choose any products based on what you read in the Guide?	6. Did you make any changes to your home design as a result of reading the Guide?
7a. If you answered "yes" to question 5 or 6 above, what made it EASY to make changes or choose the products, as suggested in the Guide?	7. Did you include or choose any products based on what you read in the Guide?
7b. If you answered "no" to question 5 or 6 above, what made it DIFFICULT to make changes or choose the products, as suggested in the Guide?	8a. If you answered "yes" to question 6 or 7 above, what made it EASY to make changes or choose the products, as suggested in the Guide?
8. Did you use any of the checklists included in the Guide?	8b. If you answered "no" to question 6 or 7 above, what made it DIFFICULT to make changes or choose the products, as suggested in the Guide?
	9. Did you use any of the checklists included in the Guide?
Last page	
If you have any other comments about the Guide, the house buying process or Clarendon Homes, please let us know.	
3. Please provide us with your name and mailing address so we can contact you if you have won a \$30 Myer gift voucher.	

END OF SURVEY

Email: Clarendon Survey Mailout Text

Complete the Your Home Buyer's Guide survey and you could win a Myer gift voucher

Dear Maggie,

Thank you for your interest in the Your Home Buyer's Guide. We are interested in your feedback on the Guide and are conducting a quick online survey.

The first 20 people to complete the survey will win a \$30 Myer Gift Voucher!

Please complete the survey at:

[Your Home Buyer's Guide Survey](#)

by Friday 25 July for your chance to win!

Your responses will be kept confidential and will be used for planning a second edition of the Guide.

Thank you for your feedback!

The Guide publishers

Note: This link is uniquely tied to this survey and your email address, please do not forward this message.

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.

[Remove me from this mailing list](#)

B2 Telephone Discussion Guide

Discussion Guide set up by initial email contact and then follow on phone call Email

Subject line: Thank you for your feedback on the Your Home Buyer's Guide

Thank you for taking the time to respond to the survey about the Your Home Buyer's Guide. Your feedback is important to us and will help us improve the next edition of the Guide.

We are emailing you again because we were interested in your responses to the survey .

We'd like to call you with a few quick follow up questions about your use of the Guide and the decisions you've been making about your new home. We would like to know more about your needs and any barriers or opportunities you've been encountering as you've been going through the house purchasing process.

Unless you tell us you are not interested in being contacted further, we will call you within the next week to ask you some further questions. This conversation should take 5-10minutes.

Please let us know by return email if you do not wish to be contacted.

Thank you again for your time and feedback. Those of you who have won a Myer voucher will be receiving it in the mail shortly.

Kind regards,
Helaine Stanley
On behalf of the Your Home Buyer's Guide evaluation team

Groups to approach

- 1 All who have purchased a home (approx. 20-30 participants)
- 2 Those who mentioned the Guide helped them realise 'the small things that made a big difference'. (approx. 2-3 participants)
- 3 Those who mentioned 'the Guide helped them to prioritise their needs'. (approx. 5 participants)

Total – minimum 15 interviews Maximum 40

Interview protocol

Introduction

Hi, my name is and I'm calling about the Your Home Buyer's Guide. We'd like to talk to the person in your household who filled in the online survey about the Guide. Is that you?

(if yes, continue, if no, 'could I please speak to them?')

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the survey, some of your answers were interesting to us and we'd like to ask you a few additional questions about your responses. This will take 5-10 minutes of your time. Do you have time to talk now?

If yes, continue. If no, find suitable call-back time.

We will include a pdf of the Guide in the email for people to familiarise themselves with the Guide if required. People can choose to view it, or not.

Body - Questions in order of existing survey – tailored as below

1. Design and Product Choices - ask about these – drawing on answers given

Group 1

Drill down questions to find more detail from interesting pieces noted- i.e. “useful for ideas” - :“What sort of ideas did the Guide give you- can you give any examples?” etc.

A tailored survey has been prepared to each participant.

Group 2- those with node-ST/BD

“What were the small things that you mentioned? And what sort of difference did they make to you?”

Group 3- those with node- PN

“What were your needs prior to reading the Guide and how did they change in order after reading the Guide?”

2. Barriers and Opportunities- ask about these

In the process of making decisions about your new home,

- what has made it easy (or possible) for you to make the changes or choose the products suggested in the Guide ?
- what has made it difficult to make the changes or choose the products suggested in the Guide ?
- What would have made it (even) easier to make the design changes or choose the products suggested in the Guide?

3. Design and product choice options-

- What are three things you would have liked to do differently with your home but weren't/haven't been able to?
- Can you think of anything that may have helped you to add or include these in your home?

Conclusion

Before we finish, do you have any other questions or comments about the Your Home Buyer's Guide?

Thank you very much for your time. Your feedback is important to us and will help us improve the next edition of the Guide.

Approval checked

We will check to make sure the potential people to telephone have ticked the “please contact....” box in the Clarendon database

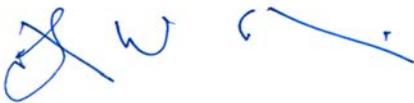
B3. Program Partners Discussion Guide

Your Home Buyers Guide Guide Partners Discussion Questions

These questions are designed to guide discussion/input. They may not be dealt with in order.

1. *Comment generally on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Your Home Buyers Guide Project.*
2. *Was the partnership approach used effective in this project?*
3. *How might partnership be improved for future editions?*
4. *How well was the Guide distributed? What comments can you make about the extent of the distribution?*
5. *Does there appear to be an increase in the general awareness of sustainability issues among people interested in housing [buyers and potential buyers] over the past twelve months?*
6. *Do you have any there evidence of this in real terms. For example: increase selection of sustainability features, design and inclusions?*
7. *Do you have any evidence and/or qualitative information which reflect on the impact of the Guide home buyer's choices?*
8. *Into the future, do you see a continuing role for the Guide in promoting sustainability to new project home buyers? What role do you think it should have?*
9. *What changes could be made to the Guide [and/or its promotion/distribution] to improve its usefulness?*

Any other comments?.....Thank you



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B4 YHBG Program Managers Discussion Guide Your Home Buyers Guide

B4. Clarendon Program Manager: Discussion Questions

These questions are designed to guide discussion/input. They may not be dealt with in order.

1. *What has been the most positive aspect of your experience of the Your Home Buyers Guide project?*
2. *What have been the most challenging aspects?*
3. *Comment generally on the efficiency and effectiveness of the Your Home Buyers Guide Project.*
4. *In general was the partnership approach used effective in this project? Did it work better in some places than others? Why?*
5. *How might partnership be improved for future editions/activity?*
6. *How well was the Guide distributed? What comments can you make about the extent of the distribution? Were there differences between jurisdictions, why?*
7. *Does there appear to be an increase in the general awareness of sustainability issues among people interested in housing [buyers and potential buyers] over the past twelve months?*
8. *Do you have any evidence and/or qualitative information which reflect on the impact of the Guide home buyer's choices?*
9. *Into the future, do you see a continuing role for the Guide in promoting sustainability to new project home buyers? What role do you think it should have?*
10. *With particular regard to Investa/Clarendon*
 - a. *Should you continue to promote sustainability to customers/potential customers? If so how and is the guide a part of this? How can the Guide benefit Clarendon more?*
 - b. *What has been the attitude of Clarendon staff [sales/contract etc], to the Guide? What is your perception about how well they have they embraced it as apart of their work?*
 - c. *Is the Guide an appropriate/effective strategic approach – for you, for Investa – for Clarendon?*
11. *What changes could be made to the Guide [and/or its promotion/distribution] to improve its usefulness?*

Any other comments?.....Thank you

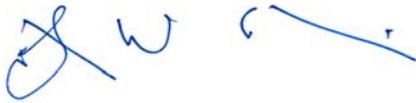
B5 Stakeholders Discussion Guide

Your Home Buyers Guide Evaluation Stakeholders Discussion Questions

These questions are designed to guide discussion/input. They may not be dealt with in order.

1. *Are you aware of the Your Home Buyers Guide? How did you first learn about it?*
2. *What are your general views about the Guide and its usefulness?*
3. *How have you used/promoted/and/or seen the guide used? Can you describe the responses of customers to the guide?*
4. *Over the past 12 months in general have you noticed any evidence of change in the demand for [interest in] more sustainable housing? If so how might the Guide have influenced this?*
5. *Has there been evidence of changes in awareness about sustainability issues at point of sale? What has this been?*
6. *Into the future, how might the Guide be amended [content/distribution etc] so that it can have a bigger impact?*

Any other comments?.....Thank you



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B6. Managers Focus Group Guide

Your Home Buyers Guide Clarendon Managers Focus Group Discussion Questions

These questions are designed to guide discussion/input. They may not be dealt with in order.

1. *Over the past 12 months have you noticed any change in the demand for [interest in] more sustainable housing?*

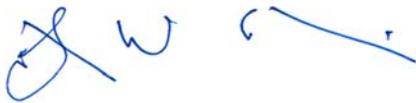
In discussing this you might comment on the adoption and use of technology and improved behaviour that impact on sustainability And or the increased selection of more sustainable features design and inclusions

2. *If so, do you have any thoughts about how the YHBG might have influenced or supported this?*
3. *Has there been evidence of changes in awareness about sustainability issues at point of sale?*
4. *What has been the attitude of Clarendon staff [sales/contract etc], to the guide? To what extent have they embraced it as apart of their work?*

In discussing this please comment on the willingness and confidence of the staff to use/promote the Guide

5. *Into the future:*
 - *Should Clarendon continue to promote sustainability to its customers/potential customers? If so how and is the guide a part of this? How can the Guide benefit Clarendon more?*
 - *What changes need to be made to the Guide [and/or its promotion/distribution] to extend its usefulness?*
 - *What are the opportunities for Clarendon's business*

Any other comments?.....Thank you



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Appendix 3: The Clarendon Residential Staff Training Process – Brief Overview

The intention of the in house training about the Guide for Clarendon Residential staff was to provide highly engaging training about the *Your Home Buyer's Guide*. The brief from Clarendon for this project indicated that the objectives of the training were to:

1. *increase awareness of staff of the Guide*
2. *increase skills in how to use the Guide with clients*
3. *increase awareness of the environmental issues involved in choosing a project home*
4. *address any concerns or questions staff may have about these environmental issues*
5. *increase the likelihood that staff will influence clients to select more sustainable optional features*
6. *create a desire for further training on sustainability among staff.*

In meeting these objectives the following two part training regimen was developed and implemented for sales, tender, contract and colour staff at Clarendon. All staff undertake Module 1 and then staff undertake Module 2 or 3 as appropriate. Module 2 is directed at sales staff and Module 3 at staff working at the end of the process [for example tender presenters]. A brief outline of each module is provided below and all PowerPoint presentations and training activities used in the delivery of these modules are available from Clarendon. Detailed evaluation reports for each workshop are also available from Clarendon

Module 1: Introduction to *Your Home Buyer's Guide*: What is Sustainability?

This module covered the following content and particularly relates to objectives 1, 3, 5 and 6. Note content list below is preliminary and not necessarily in order.

- Introduction to the Guide – what is it and why do we need it?
- Overview of how to use the Guide.
- What is sustainability – making it work for me?
- Why should Clarendon staff be interested in sustainability?
- What's in the Guide for Clarendon and the Clarendon Clients?

Module 2: Using *Your Home Buyer's Guide* - Sales Staff

This module will cover the following content and particularly relates to objectives 1, 2, 4 and 6. Note content list below is preliminary and not necessarily in order.

- How will the Guide be best used by sales staff? Working with the guide to help your sales.
- Siting, location and planning issues presented through review of a number of scenarios.
- Improving skills knowledge about sustainability issues and sales.
- Your questions answered; dealing with the technical issues in an invigorating manner.
- Other training needs.

Module 3: Using *Your Home Buyer's Guide* – Tender/Contract Presenters and Colour Staff

This module will cover the following content and particularly relates to objectives 1, 2, 4 and 6. Note content list below is preliminary and not necessarily in order.

- How will the Guide be best used by Tender/Contract Presenters and Colour staff? Working with the guide to help your work with clients.
- Which aspects of the guide are most appropriate in the work that Tender/Contract Presenters and Colour staff undertake with clients? Focusing on:
 - Choosing your dream home
 - Checking the essentials
 - Warming and cooling your home
 - Selecting fittings and appliances

- Designing outdoor living and garden.
- Improving skills knowledge about sustainability issues and client needs and options.
- Technical questions answered – an invigorating Q&A process that really helps.
- Other training needs.

All workshops were fully evaluated and Clarendon holds all evaluation reports. The following is an example of one of the evaluation forms used as part of this process.

In addition the Chairperson of Investa wrote to all staff providing them with a copy and encouraging its use. A copy of this letter is also attached below.

Appendix 4



**Your Home – Buyer’s Guide
Modules 1 & 2 Evaluation Form**

Please take a moment to complete the following information.

- Today's training was..... *Circle the most appropriate description.*
 - Very helpful
 - Helpful
 - Not very helpful
 - A waste of time
 - Other.....

Give a reason for your answer.

▪ Did the training help you to <i>[please tick the appropriate box]:</i>	Not at all	A little	A lot
<i>Get you familiar with the Your Home – Buyers Guide</i>			
<i>Help you to use/respond to the guide in the most effective way</i>			
<i>Provide high quality advice to customers and increase their likelihood of selling a home [impact positively on relationships with customers]</i>			
<i>Enhance Clarendon's marketing advantage through appropriate use of the Guide</i>			
<i>Learn more so you can show customer you know your stuff</i>			
<i>Gain specific technical information</i>			

- *Circle the most appropriate description [one only] from the choices below*
 - I feel very confident in using the guide with my clients.
 - I feel OK about the guide and using it with my clients.
 - I might get asked a difficult question or two as a result of the Guide being out there but I know I wont worry about this
 - I think my job will be much harder now and I wish the guide was not out there
 - Another response.....

Give a reason for your answer

- Can you provide your thought about the best and worst things about the workshop

The best thing about the workshop was...	The worst thing about the workshop was.....
--	---

Thank you



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20 December 2007

Gabrielle Kuiper
315/1 Marian Street
REDFERN NSW 2016

Dear Gabrielle,

RE: 'YOUR HOME BUYER'S GUIDE'

It is with great pleasure that I enclose Investa's most recent sustainability initiative 'Your Home Buyer's Guide'. Our residential business Clarendon has worked closely with a number of government departments and agencies to deliver this resource for new home buyers.

At Investa we believe that our focus on sustainability will enhance our brand and the overall value of our business. We have won many awards for our work in sustainability and we are committed to continuing this valuable work.

As one of Australia's largest residential developers we know that we are in an ideal position to help buyers improve the choices they make when purchasing a home

This Guide steps buyers of new homes through the house purchase process while educating them about the ways they can choose a more comfortable home which reduces the running costs and increases the long term value of the house.

I encourage you to read the Guide, to share it with friends and family who may be interested.

Yours sincerely,

Rei Umekubo
CHAIRMAN

