



Home:LIFE is a prototype web-based tool and planned smartphone App that provides detailed, personalised assessments of potential housing choices. It assesses the lifestyle, financial and sustainability aspects of a dwelling and its location, to influence housing choices towards more liveable and affordable options and more sustainable urban outcomes.

The economic, social and health impacts of poorly planned development in dispersed cities and poorly designed apartments in urban areas are increasingly prevalent.

We identified the foundations of walkable, diverse and compact urban development, but also the need to inform the public of the ongoing implications of their housing choices, in order to encourage more sustainable choices.

With RMIT University we have developed a web-based tool to assist households to make suitable, sustainable and cost-effective housing choices, based on a personalised assessment of affordability and liveability. The prototype tool is now available for testing and user feedback at:

www.home-life.com.au

The tool is envisaged as a city-shaping initiative, which informs users of the long-term implications of their housing choices, affecting lifestyle, access, health and financial outcomes. The tool encourages households to pursue more compact, efficient and well-located/well-serviced housing, thereby shaping housing demand towards a more serviceable, sociable and sustainable city.

We see broader potential application of this initiative. Banks could use the tool to make a balanced assessment of housing cost, against likely ongoing living costs. It could also be used to understand the real value of infrastructure provision in cities, by measuring the value to the many households that will benefit.

In rapidly urbanising cities of the developing world, where urban migrants use mobile communications to access employment, housing and social opportunities, this technology could assist in guiding and influencing the patterns of informal development, by communicating the locations of current or planned infrastructure, for example.

Currently in beta/prototype form, the tool provides limited yet useable assessment functionality. It is set up to make multiple assessments of a selected location and dwelling to provide consolidated outcomes about **Getting Around, Enjoying Life, Being Green, Being Healthy** and **Saving Money**, for the user's particular household. The results are presented graphically, and evolve as the user inputs further information about the household, dwelling and location. Further information is provided in the form of risks, benefits and recommendations.

The software is configured to allow ongoing expansion of the measures.

Having gained significant industry interest in the tool, we are now investigating methods and approaches towards its further development and commercialisation.