

slice of paradise to call their own

between \$2.65 million and \$2.85 million. While the price difference between real estate on Hamilton Island and the Whitsunday mainland is stark, both suffer low levels of supply and have experienced intense periods of growth in the past two years.

Where the median price of land on the island is \$1,142,500, along the Whitsunday coast it's \$233,000, despite increasing 45 per cent in the past 12 months.

Mr Leet said the island's "resort-living" lifestyle and its airport were big drawcards for buyers, many of whom are retirees who spend six months on the island.

Other novelties such as the use of golf buggies for transport instead of cars were another bonus.

"We can only ever develop 30 per cent of the island and we have accommodation ranging from 3½-star to five-star instead of caravan parks and backpacker hostels," Mr Leet said.

"We obtain much higher nightly rates for holiday letting.

"It is a safe haven with no crime and everyone is a more mature type of person. There are also no cheap shops, so it does attract a more upmarket client."

Land prices on Hamilton Island have experienced significant growth in the past couple of years. Median land prices jumped 23 per cent in 2005 and 25 per cent this year.



CHANGE AS GOOD AS A HOLIDAY: Steve Smart and his wife Evelyn moved to Hamilton Island from suburban Sydney.

Move north a dream come true

FOR the past 12 months former Baulkham Hills residents Steve Smart and his wife Evelyn have lived out their tropical dream, moving from suburbia to a new family home on Hamilton Island in the Whitsundays.

Having bought a block of land that overlooks the island's marina two years ago, the couple, with their children Ryan, 5, and Kayla, 7, designed and built their home with floor to ceiling windows and multiple balconies to maximise water views.

"We were after a lifestyle change," Mr Smart, a former pilot, said. "Hamilton Island has a really good vibe. We'd been to Airlie Beach a few times and bought a block of land there as well. But on Hamilton Island everyone is there for the same reasons. They want a change of pace and want to explore the islands and you find it's quite easy to make friends."

Mr Smart said while he misses friends and family in NSW he is happy with the move.

Coastal Lifestyle

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