Roost
Home Loan Affordability Report

roost MORTGAGE BROKERS

25 June 2014

Roost - Home loan affordability in Wellington

A monthly assessment of home loan affordability for a typical buyer

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The Roost home loan affordability index for May 2014:

It now takes 56.6% of one median income to pay the mortgage on a median priced house purchased in May, up from April's 56.2 %(r). A typical buyer is assumed to be in the 30-34 age group.

This index was 52.7% a year ago and 58.2% five years ago. The affordability index reached its highest point of 90.7% in March 2008.

Essentially the median income for the typical buyer is not high enough to buy a median priced house, even with a 20% deposit. However, they may find the lower-quartile priced house is affordable (check our first-home buyer series). It is also true that a couple/family with more than one income may find the median house price is affordable. (Check household income section below).

Deposit

The standard buyer index is calculated assuming that the house buyer has already has a 20% deposit. Based on current income and house prices it will take an individual 8.5 years to save the 20% deposit as now required by most banks.

Key drivers of home loan affordability:

House prices

The median house price was $412,500 in May, down from $415,980 last month. The median house price was $390,000 in May 2013 which puts annual growth at 5.8%. Five years ago the median was $380,000.

Dwelling sales in May were 629, up from April's 613. They are now lower than the 785 sales twelve months ago and lower than the 673 sales five years ago.

Wellington house prices in May		Month (change)	Year (change)
Median	$412,500	-0.8%↓	5.8% ↑
New Zealand Median	$430,000	-0.5%↓	9.7%↑

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After-tax income

The median weekly take-home pay for a typical buyer was $885.36 in May, up 3.0% from the $859.42 in May 2013.

Five years ago, median weekly take-home pay was $792.53.

Disposable Income (wages minus mortgage payment)

Weekly disposable income was $384.35 in May, which is $22.15 lower than the $406.50 in May 2013 (and compares with $386.84 one month earlier). This measure shows that the typical buyers' income is just too low by itself to afford the mortgage payments on the median priced home.

Take-home pay	weekly ($)	a month ago	change	a year ago	change
Wages	$885.36	$883.36 (r)	↑	$859.42	↑$25.94 (3.0%)
Disposable Income	$384.35	$386.84	↓	$406.50	↓ $22.15

Interest rates and mortgage payments

Floating rates were increased in April 2014 in response to the recent OCR hike. The average bank interest rate for a floating mortgage rate was 6.23% for May, 47 basis points higher than the 5.76% twelve months earlier.

The April OCR rise of +0.25% is the second of a series of increases, although it was very slow to flow through in April. The RBNZ said it is on track to raise the OCR by about 2% over the next two years. When that is done, it will have had a substantial and negative impact on affordability.

Wholesale interest rates often move differently to the OCR and borrowers should check their options to switch to a fixed rate.

Our model will assume that borrowers switch to a 2 year fixed rate in June 2014, following the shift reflected in RBNZ data.

Mortgage rate and payment	Weekly pymt	a month ago	change	a year ago	change
Floating rate	6.230%	6.045%	↑	5.758%	↑ 47 basis points
Mortgage payment	$501.01	$496.52	↑	$452.92	↑ $48.09 (10.6%)

Household affordability

Household income is a key criteria for lending institutions. We have established a set of standardised household profiles, and these can be used to check affordability.

Based on our standard household profile, it now takes 37.1% of the median take-home pay to service a mortgage of a median home purchased in May. Median-priced housing is affordable for families in Wellington, when both adults work.

This is up from 36.8% in the previous month, April. A year ago, it was 34.6% - five years ago it was 38.2%.

The profile we use for a standard buyer household is one adult male working full-time, one adult female working 50%, and one child aged 5 years.

Details of our household profiles, the data sources, and the methods used, are set out in the Notes section of this report, below.

Refer to our Median Multiple reports for a reconciliation of this report to the internationally comparable benchmarks, by city.

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Full regional reports are available below:

Auckland region

Auckland Central	North Shore	Auckland South
Auckland West		New Zealand

Wellington region

Wellington City	Hutt Valley	Porirua
Kapiti Coast		

Northland

Whangarei		New Zealand

Waikato and Bay of Plenty

Hamilton	Tauranga	Rotorua

Hawkes Bay and Gisborne

Napier	Hastings	Gisborne

Taranaki, Manawatu and Wanganui

New Plymouth	Palmerston North	Wanganui

Nelson and Malborough

Nelson		New Zealand

Canterbury

Christchurch	Timaru	

Otago, Central Otago Lakes and Southland

Queenstown	Dunedin	Invercargill

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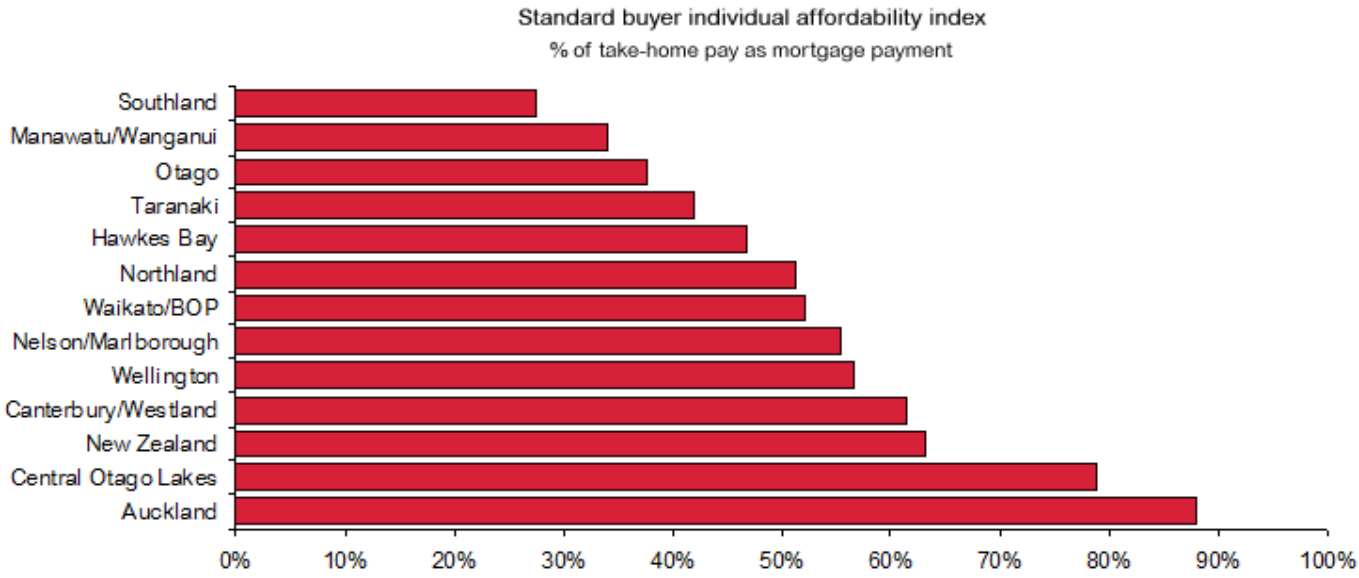

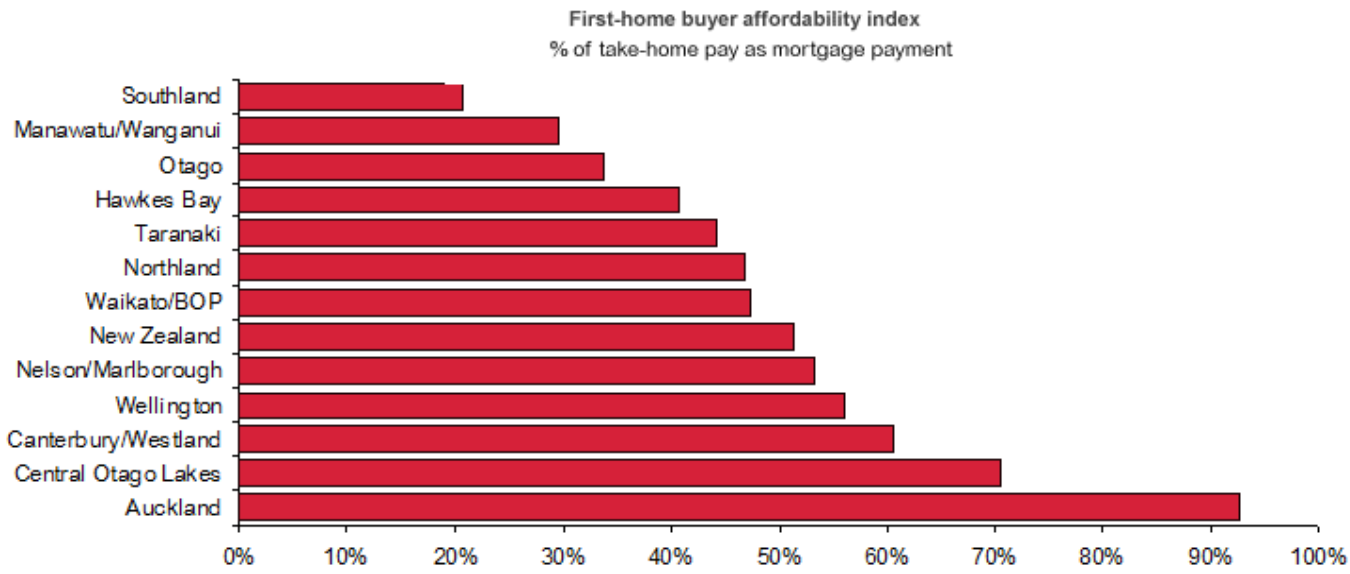

Note to Editors:

This work must be referred to as **The Roost Home Loan Affordability series**. There are two related components – the **Standard home loan affordability series**, and **the First-home-buyer home loan affordability series**. They have both been produced by www.interest.co.nz. Please direct queries via email to info@interest.co.nz, or see our contact information below.

This research has been sponsored by Roost since July 2010. **Roost**, owned by AMP, is one of New Zealand's largest independent home loan and investment property brokers with 16 franchisees nationwide. Roost offers to source the perfect loan for its customers from a panel of lenders, and insurance advice from Roost insurance specialists. Roost was established in 1996. For more information please visit www.roost.co.nz

Sources / Definitions / Methodology

***a typical buyer:** An individual in the 30-34 year old age group who buys the median house price with 20% deposit.

Interpreting the Index:

The home loan affordability index measures the proportion a weekly mortgage payment is of weekly take-home pay (for a median priced house). An index measure is generated for each region, and nationally. We calculate, but do not publish, this index using other various mortgage interest rate terms.

Interpreting the Household Income Models:

A mortgage is 'affordable' when the mortgage payment is no greater than 40% of household weekly take-home pay. The value of the mortgage is based on the rules below (see Home Loan).

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Weekly Income:
From the July 2007 Report onward, the source on which we base our estimates of weekly income, is now the LEEDS (Linked employer-employee data survey) data from Statistics New Zealand.

The standard home loan affordability report is based on the LEEDS data for the 30-34 age group.

Income tax rates from IRD are used to calculate a take-home pay (which is the LEEDS-based data net of the specific income tax rate).

Home Loan: (Median house price less a 20% deposit)
Mortgage repayments are based on the value of the home loan, paid weekly for 25 years, using the bank average interest rate. The home loan is assumed to be a standard table mortgage, where both interest and principal is repaid in a fixed weekly payment made in arrears. The repayment is calculated using the tools at http://www.interest.co.nz/calculators/mortgage-calculator

Mortgage Rates:
Average mortgage interest rates are sourced from www.interest.co.nz. These averages are for banks only as banks have 90%+ of the mortgage market. Affordability calculations are done for mortgages at the floating rate and one year through to the five fixed-rate terms. In this report, the two-year fixed mortgage interest rate is used until August 2010. From September 2010 onward, this research has adopted a variable or floating interest rate as the market is shifted to a lower and cheaper rate on a floating basis.

House price data:
Median house prices are as reported by the Real Estate Institute of New Zealand. Although the REINZ series is more volatile than the QV equivalent, there is a highly positive correlation between the two series. The REINZ series is more current and offers an earlier indication of market trends.

Saving Rates:
Average savings interest rates are sourced from www.interest.co.nz. These averages are for banks only, and use the 90 day term deposit rate. Saving calculations take into account the individuals marginal tax rates as defined by IRD.

Household affordability:
Household affordability is calculated in the same way as individual affordability except instead of individual income, a household income is used. The household income for a *standard-buyer* household is made from 1 full time male median income, 50% of a female median income (from LEEDS data) both in the 30-34 age range, plus the Working For Families income support they are entitled to receive under that program.

Disclaimer
IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ
No reader should rely on the contents of this report for making a specific investment or purchase decision. The information in this report is supplied strictly on the basis that only overall market trends are being reported on, and that all data, conclusions and opinions expressed are provisional and subject to revision.

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