



**15 Aug 2022**

**Announcer**

Welcome to The Future of Australia podcast where your host Derek Stewart interviews the entrepreneurs and founders running the fastest growing new businesses in Australia.

**Derek Stewart**

On episode 57 I speak with Brett Birkill the founder and managing director of Birkill Developments. We discuss how he knew after his first day of university, that it not right for him and why he focussed on working and being paid to learn. How he built one of the largest privately owned workwear brands in Australia, before selling to focus on his passion for property. The highs and lows of having your wife and life partner as your business partner and how a relentless passion to challenging what is possible lead to Birkill Developments growing 286% last financial year, doing over \$26 million in annual revenue, and becoming the third fastest growing new business in Australia. If you're looking for a sustainable, efficient, and modern property, Birkill is creating property developments today for lasting memories tomorrow. Check out Birkill at [birkill.com.au](http://birkill.com.au). Okay, so I'm here with Brett Birkill, the founder and managing director at Birkill Developments. Welcome to the podcast.

**Brett Birkill**

Thank you, Derek. Good to be here.

**Derek Stewart**

Excellent. Can you tell us what were you doing before you started Birkill Developments? What did you study? What type of roles or companies were working in?

**Brett Birkill**

Directly before Birkill Developments I sold company, a workwear clothing company. It was a business that started in 2003 and we ran it for 13 years. It was set up by myself and my wife. So we started that from scratch just the two of us and built that up over 13 years. We ended up with around 60 staff and a couple of warehouses in Australia, operations in Hong Kong and China and a sales team in about six/seven different countries. We started with nothing and developed it in to one of Australia's leading privately owned workwear brands. And so that was the sort of last flow out of business and on to Birkill Developments.

Prior to that, I had a great upbringing. I loved going to school and which is maybe a little bit strange, but had some great friends. I had an awesome family and parents and sister. So all that was pretty normal. And when I left school I enrolled in a marketing course in Melbourne at Swinburne Uni. I was itching to get in to some sort of business or start working on something right from the get go. I had a desire to try and make some money.

At the time, when you're 17 you dont necessarily need to make millions of dollars. It can be just, you know, \$500 or \$1000 and just generate some income. So I went there, I enrolled, and right from the get go, it just wasn't for me. Im in my mid 40s and it was probably a little bit of a different time where I would say 60, 70%, or maybe a little bit more 70 or 80% went to uni and probably 20% didn't. I was one of the 20%. So I never ended up going to uni and pretty much started working from the day I left school.

And just to track back a little bit further. I grew up with parents that were hard workers and also ran their own business. My grandpa was also in clothes. That's how the sort of the clothing background came from. So it was something that I grew up with. I always saw my family members and particularly my mum and dad working hard. So I had that real understanding that you just had to get stuck into stuff and work hard to get anywhere. And it wasn't necessarily at that age having a goal to do something in particular, it was more so about getting up and doing something to get going.

So I worked with my parents for about six years. So that was sort of it. You know, 17, 18, 19 and 20 years old. So basically from the day I left school. And whilst I enjoyed that and picked up a huge amount of experience, had a growing desire because all the clothing back in that stage, was based in Australia, so I had a really strong desire to learn about China and Asia because at the time, China was the growing Mecca around clothing. Melbourne was the hub of the Australian clothing trade back then, and it was moving to China. So I ended up jaggging a job with Devonport where really was lucky, because I probably wasn't qualified enough. But I certainly certainly had the desire to do a great job. And in the end, I worked selling boxer shorts for Devonport and at the time, they were a huge brand.

In Australia, boxer shorts, silk and polyester boxer shorts, that had Looney Tunes on them, were all the rage. They occupied the main windows of Myers and David Jones for many years in Melbourne, CBD and Sydney and all the major shopping centres. So I became the offshore production manager and had a great time. I learned a lot of things about China and in particular production in Asia. The other great passion I always had was property. So I was growing up with clothing, and then and then growing up with property as well.

I bought my first home in my early 20s. And same sort of thing with working early, i realised I had to get into property early. And having a go early and putting some money down and just trying to establish something was probably one of my greatest understandings. The earlier you can do it and generate something that compounds, the more quickly it grows as time goes on. So I did that. And then moved on and became a

real estate agent for Hocking Stewart for about 12 months. So it was the same thing like Davenport and working with my parents, I learned just an immense amount from Hocking Stewart, and from the people that I worked with.

Some of the some of the guys at Hocking Stuart I still talk to today. And they were brilliant salespeople and very, very passionate, hard working. And I learned about the hunger to get a deal done. And just the understanding that you know, it can be very competitive in selling real estate, especially things like listings and trying to get stock to on sell when you're up against 10 or 12 other different local agents. Many of them at that time had a lot more experience than me.

The ability to actually win listings and make sales was very cutthroat. You had to be hard at it all the time or work super hard. And working at Hocking Stuart, working on a Sunday auctions and doing opens. So it was a seven day a week business. And they were the first real estate agents to do it. I realised that these guys were building a model and a process that put hard work at the forefront. So they they said to all their clients, we're going to be the first real estate agent to open on Sundays. And we're doing that because we're going to be working harder than the next agency.

And in today's environment, that can possibly sound a little bit controversial because you know, work from home or work life balance and all those sorts of conversations are coming up all the time. I learned that from them. Yeah, their decision to open on Sundays certainly fit in with what I was thinking as well and the harder work paid off.

Just going back to Davenport. I met my my wife today in Hong Kong. And she was also very entrenched in clothing and you know, at the time we were producing product, clothing and so it wasn't a relationship like it is now but that was certainly one of the biggest changes in my life. Of course that had the biggest impact in my life because we're now married and we went on to start Prime Mover Workwear and not long after that and now of course we are now doing Birkill Developments. That's in a nutshell, that's sort of where I've come from and how I ended up here.

### **Derek Stewart**

Definitely quite a journey so far. Going back to your high school you mentioned you liked high school, that you're good at school. And then if I understand you got into university, but then you drop out or you got accepted, but then you change your mind or what sort of made that decision, it's a pivotal point, in between High School and University. Did you start and it wasn't what you're expecting? Is that why you get straight into business? Or did you never quite start and just said, I'm just gonna go straight to work?

### **Brett Birkill**

I never started. When I went to enrollment day and just to spell out exactly what happened on the first day. I was sitting there trying to work out this weekly schedule, like I think it was a fortnight or a month. And I sat there for hours trying to juggle classes and everything you need to to fit everything and it was a struggle.

And I was hesitant to start. At this point I was like a lot of people who leave school, you don't have a million dollars in your back pocket. And so right from the get go, it felt uncomfortable. It didn't feel right. And I only went there probably because it was the thing to do as in, more and more people were going to university. In saying all of that, I am absolutely not against further study. Education is absolutely important. And there's certain things that you have to study. To be a doctor or solicitor, these sorts of professions, you have to study it. But for me, it just did not fit from the get go.

So I never started. I never got past day one of enrollment. And I started working from that point on. I was sitting there thinking at this may be too simplistic, but I was thinking, I need to pay these people to do something I don't really want to do. I prefer to go to work and start. Not that I knew what I was going to learn on the job, so to speak, but I knew that the experience of doing something and understanding everything that goes on day to day would be something that personally I would take far more out of than the university course. And on the flip side, I got paid instead of having to pay someone else. So the whole, that whole scenario seemed to be a no brainer for me.

**Derek Stewart**

And what did your parents say at the time? Were they supportive? Did they say we trust you, you'll find your way. Or were they saying, no, you should go to university, you have make a big mistake. What was their reaction at the time?

**Brett Birkill**

Yeah, no, that were very supportive, like always. And I think I think I can recall at the time, my dad saying that he wasn't surprised, and he could always sort of see me as being the person to push for something that I really wanted to do and be passionate about something I wanted to do. And I think that has always been a driver of where I've come from.

And you desperately need to want to do something. When I say desperate, it is actually desperate. Because the competition in so many things is so high. It's the same with the university course, like you're going to a university course with 100,000 other people, it's not to say that it's not a good thing. But if you want to be the best, you need the best marks and you need to have that same passion and drive to be the absolute best.

But I was very supported, because I think they knew that, that the fit wasn't what I wanted to do. And they were very supportive behind that knowing that if that's what I wanted to do, then that was going to be the best decision. They were 100% behind whatever I decided.

**Derek Stewart**

And were your parents real estate investors? Was real estate a passion of theirs outside of their business? Or were they purely focused on their business and real estate wasn't something you sort of grew up in?

**Brett Birkill**

So they were sort of similar, I guess but nothing like what we're doing now. Their business certainly was their focus. So yeah, like, of course their home and different properties in and around what they did with their business. But yeah, not so much focused like what we're doing now, but it was definitely part of life. Absolutely.

**Derek Stewart**

Okay, you had a successful business or clothing business, and sometimes that's the biggest and hardest thing to leave, right? If something's failing, it's easy to say, hey, it's not working. But when something's actually successful, it's hard to know when to move on. How did you decide? You built this big business? I think it's a 50-60 staff, its international. it's going great. What made you decide it was good, but you thought you had something new and quite different inside of you?

**Brett Birkill**

It's a great question. Absolutely, we were probably at the crossroads. We had developed a very strong business from scratch, it was a massive amount of work. And it was, it was a huge chunk of our life, which which we were very grateful for that we could develop that chunk of our life into something so great.

We got to the point where it was either double down and become a public company or move on. So we would have been sort of equal largest private company. There was King Gee, Hard Yakka who were associated with public companies, and Bisley Workwear who was a public company as well. We were probably in that next group and also those sorts of brands were our major competitors. To really compete against them, we needed to take the next lot of investment.

It's difficult to transact the business, it's difficult to ship to get the business to be in a position profitable. And then to be saleable. There's lots of profitable businesses that people don't want to buy for lots of reasons. So when all of those bits and pieces came together, we realised that there was there was something really good staring at us in the face, and we'd be silly to pass up the opportunity.

**Brett Birkill**

I was very influenced by my wife, by Wandy, who was who was a big part of the business, she controlled all the offshore part of the operation. And, you know, when we sat down the cold hard light of the day we said you know we have something great here, there's going to be a buyer that's going to be fit, this is going to fit for purpose. So it was a matter of finding the right buyer. And also, as well as being in a very strong position, it's not always that you get the opportunity to have everything lined up everything in order everything working well and sell.

In the back of our minds knowing that and my wife was exactly the same. She had she had one other great passion and that was property. We had over many years always wanted to develop a property development business alongside the clothing but because it clothing took up so much money effort time, we were always worried about carving out finance and effort into something else.

To then potentially be detrimental to the core businesses driving, you know, everything that we're we've put into so when you are sort of cashed out there, would then allow us to move on to something else that we're really passionate about, which is which is what we're doing now. But in saying that it was a very hard decision more so for myself. Because like anything, when when you started from scratch, I can still remember the very first days speaking to our first customers, they were they were there moments that will live with you forever, and the relationships you build in the field.

We had something in the vicinity of 3000 resellers, it's a lot of people. I would have met just about all of them around the country and around different parts of the world over those 13 years. And a lot of those relationship build you know, they that I still catch up like this three or four years now and I still catch up and speak with with a lot of the people I develop relationships with.

So it's probably it's the people and the and those connections that you do develop through a consistent and single goal and that is, you know, trying to be your absolute best and deliver something better this afternoon tomorrow. They forge lifelong friendships so that as much as the dollars and cents it was it was hard to pass on. But you know, once we did I'm glad I got pushed. I did get pushed hard by by one day and my wife so who again was half the business so we'll probably without her I probably wouldn't have changed.

So like a lot of things in life and probably in business. I think it's good to have good people around you with it with a mature mindset probably more at some probably more mature than me and could see you know, you could see tomorrow better than I could fit. It wasn't easy, but I'm super glad we did it because it's delivered.

**Derek Stewart**

When you started Birkill Developments like you said you kind of emotionally and financially exited the previous clothing business. What was the first 12 months harder than you expected? Was there a lot of sort of culture shock as you change industries and business models and clients and suppliers? What was that early cold months like? You're excited you're passionate but in the reality of being in a completely different business, what was that like?

**Brett Birkill**

There was clearly two sides. I knew what I was going to get into, because I've done it all before, albeit in a completely different industry. But once you start to put a couple of things down on paper, and you look at the people, you need to work with, the structure, you need to set up the finance that goes along with it, you then start to go, Okay, actually, that looks very similar to where we were before, except we're just, we just replace clothing items, and warehousing and these sorts of things.

The key fundamentals of running the business and the startup, I think are very similar. Except that, you know, we now have more behind us financially, which allowed us to kick harder and push harder from the

get go. But as you allude to, no matter how strong your plans are, and how much experience you've got, a brand new industry is always going to throw up as challenges and you were we're all very different.

### **Brett Birkill**

For example, managing production, it in a facility that we look after, in a place called Suzhou, just outside of Shanghai. All Chinese, very few speaking English. Compared to a whole group of trades, people in Melbourne, building houses, like, you couldn't get more chalk and cheese.

So just nuances and they're trying to understand and hopefully those people within the industry and, and that the people that we'd end up and we do work with now would would accept me. Accept Wandy and what we want to do and our aims. All of our goals that we've got set moving forward, you know, hope hoping that that would be the case. And nothing is ever guaranteed and it doesn't matter what the business is. There are definitely challenges, the act the actual doing it and seeing if it fits and works with people. Not everyone would get on with me, and, and vice versa. So it's trying to put all the pieces together. But I think I had a big know how and understanding because of we've done it before.

### **Derek Stewart**

In front of business, like I said, there's labour, there's materials, there's inventory, there's customers or suppliers, you've got the fundamentals. And then you've actually got 286%, last financial year, doing over 26 million in annual revenue, becoming the number three fastest growing new business in Australia. So obviously, you have used that experience and business knowledge to drive this rapid growth. Was there anything in particular that you did that, you know, allowed you to sort of grow and scale so quickly, being new to the industry?

### **Brett Birkill**

We planned for growth from the get go. So that was number one. So planning for growth and then pushing to deliver growth is always uncomfortable. Because you're never sitting, relaxing, looking at, you know, looking at the grass growing, you're always wanting to sow the next paddock. So that that was a mindset from the get go.

Then we were trying to work with and find people that had a similar mindset. Because customers are one thing, obviously, and and you've got to be able to sell the product and you got to be able to deliver a product that people want. People want to transact and pay money for no matter what it is. But in all of the things behind that to get it to that point, there's so much involved with people. So finding the right people finding the right supply, finding people that had a mindset, to equal what we wanted to do was, you know, a real focus early on, because to get in to get in bed with the wrong people at that point. Unless you're doing all these things yourself, which wouldn't deliver great growth either because, only two arms and two legs can't deliver much. They were some of the biggest challenges.

### **Derek Stewart**

Yeah, and you mention factory workers in China versus tradies in Melbourne being sort of about polar opposites with a people management hiring. Are there lessons that you learn from your first business that you think helped give you a unique or different perspective? Once you started Birkill Developments?

### **Brett Birkill**

Yeah, so it's always, we've always tried to involve and work with people that I trust, that have great experience with. And that that you can rely on to make a good decision. And, and one thing that I've definitely focused on more is, is working with those people and then allowing them room, at the end of the day, you still have to make your own decision at the end, because the buck stops with me. If I make the wrong call, and stuff goes bad, well, that's it's my fault. Someone might have advised that or done that. But still, it's my decision.

Getting a group of people around that you can pick up the phone and have a conversation, have a meeting with and let them understand what you're going through, and they listen to their advice and take their advice. So that that sort of step back approach and allowing other other people to pass on wisdom and

advice through their own experiences. They're the people we really wanted to work with him. And they're the people we've set up to help to help drive this growth.

### **Derek Stewart**

Yeah. And you mentioned yourself for growth, you have the ambition, the mindset, the skills, the capital, but then once you actually experienced the growth, obviously, it's hard sometimes the challenges of success, what were some of those growing pains, as you did rapidly, you know, triple the business and grow? What were some of the challenges of growing that?

### **Brett Birkill**

There are plenty, I mean, just the straight management of it, everything just becomes multiplied. When it becomes multiplied, then you simply need more people helping in similar areas, but just a growing group of people. So then, of course, when you rely on one to do this, and once you do that, it might then become five. So having a really clear plan, and applying that understanding of where we are, and where we want to go to, and having having all those people understand that and driving for the same same goal, which everyone's invested in. You know, that's definitely the hard thing to manage as, as growth comes along.

Then there's, there's, there's clear decisions then on, you know, on the way you manage staff and is it outsourcing, or are there more people in house? So our last business had significantly more in house staff. Now, we're more like on a contractual basis using professionals in different areas, we're turning over more now than we did back then. And that the structure is completely different. But it's working on the structure and the ability to manage those people that multiply that you have to have to enable growth to continue. I mean, that's clearly the challenge.

### **Derek Stewart**

So the construction property development space, has ups and downs. And but it seems like in the news, and maybe it's just the media, there's more so ups and downs in the construction, property development trade space than usual. How do you deal with those ups and downs? Um, has it changed how you do business? Are there trends, you're saying that, so separating the good operators from the bad as things get a bit more volatile?

### **Brett Birkill**

Yeah. So the first point is, you're absolutely correct. The media blows that up massively on the top side, and massively on the bottom side. Simply due to the fact that Australians in general, invest heavily in property. Its a great newspaper sell like, obviously, so it needs to be trimmed back dramatically, to really get a view and understanding of where the market is.

Then COVID hit and the average prediction was a fall of 30% but we increased something like 40 or 50%, making that a difference of something like 70%. These media commentators were from the biggest banks and the biggest financial institutions in the country. And that, what drove that was the continual ability for Australia being a great country to attract immigration. It's an awesome place, obviously, to invest money, and I don't want to sound like I'm trying to sell property. But it just goes along the lines of this continual negative news at the moment, is simply just that because the fundamentals of property haven't changed. And if you continue to look at long term charts, the charts only continue to grow. So I just don't share the negative news.

So currently, you probably alluding to the news at the moment, which is all all doom and gloom. I just I just don't see it. I absolutely don't see it. There's good and bad decisions to be made when purchasing but that's no different if the markets up or or down. You know, we've just been through one of the biggest reported negative growth times and negative downward trends for property pre COVID.

### **Derek Stewart**

So how do you track? Like, I think a lot of people would agree that the media, it can be all over the place, up and down. But it's a how do you track the health of sort of all the changes in the property market? Is it you're on the ground? You're talking to people every day? Yes. Your elbow deep in it? Is it? You know,

certain metrics you look at? Like, is it the fundamentals or you just focus on doing good job? And you know, even if things slow down, in the long run, good businesses will always have customers? And, you know, good suppliers will always be there, or how do you sort of think about ignoring that noise and keeping on track?

### **Brett Birkill**

Obviously, things will go up and down. That's it's not just property, it's everything else. So we take a long term view. There's some in the property business who are buying parcels of land two decades from now. We take the view that we want to buy in good areas. We want to have a product that has the infrastructure surrounding that is going to support our buyers, and deliver them great value in the long term. We understand that if we purchased today, we may look back and go okay, two or three months ago, we paid a little bit too much for that. On the flip side, there'll be the exact reverse scenario where, we purchase something that ticks all those boxes, as far as the end product, and we pay a little bit less than probably the price goes up.

We don't focus on the short term trends, we look at the key fundamentals of delivering a great product. I can say this confidently that every house we sold and every house that has settled, the value is higher today than when the purchaser moved in. And that is because we buy in spots we believe in that they're covered in surrounding infrastructure, that governments are spending money in. These areas and buyers are going to reap the benefits over time. Across the board, and over the long term, those investments for our buyers will grow. We're really keen and passionate to deliver a great product. And if we're focusing on those key things overall, it's going to deliver a growing investment and growing asset for us and for our customers.

### **Derek Stewart**

So you've obviously run other businesses, you've seen your parents business, you've done business in Asia. And again, you are running a super successful, fast growing business now. So zooming out a bit from your industry in your business. What trends do you see in entrepreneurship in Australia? What a lot of Australian entrepreneurs doing well? Where do you think Australian entrepreneurs can learn from other parts of the world?

### **Brett Birkill**

We've got great opportunities in Australia. We have everything at our fingertips, there's nothing that we can't achieve or have the opportunity to achieve. So that's clearly not the case for lots of other parts of the world. So good entrepreneurs in Australia, clearly take that opportunity, and run with it and leave a lot of noise aside. This is probably not specific to business, per se, but it obviously rubs off on business. I think sitting back, waiting for more has been fueled by COVID.

We had a lot of challenges as well. For example, there was a lot of downtime, restrictions on work sites. But thinking of other countries, there are far less opportunities. I'm just hoping for Australia that our entrepreneurship continues to run along the lines of; we really live in a lucky country. But we live in a lucky country because Australia's built a lucky country by working hard. I think it's more about attitude. I think we do great, we're in an awesome country. Because we'll be left behind in lots of different ways. I mean, you could take this conversation and into lots of different industries, where we do get left behind, but it's probably something to do with that, in my opinion.

### **Derek Stewart**

And you mentioned before, when you're in real estate, you know, seven days a week, you are in a commission only, hyper competitive cutthroat, very self driven, motivated. Do you see a move away from that? You mentioned obviously post COVID sort of four day workweeks and other things? Or is it just different industries or or people having more pathways, if they want to work hard, and really be hyper competitive, they can, but they want to work a four day a week work from home job, those options, just different strokes for different folks. So how do you say the evolving nature of that?

### **Brett Birkill**

Yeah, so it's definitely evolving more so that way. These sorts of conversations potentially become controversial between different attitudes. But yeah, absolutely, I don't see any difference. And maybe it'll start to become polarised now. There is the person that doesn't want to work from home and doesn't want to stay back and keep working from home. There is this continual talk about sort of pulling back and doing less and making it easier. In saying all of that of course, today here we're talking about business. I always preface all of these conversations around business and money's not for everyone. Someone may have a desire or goal to work their whole life for charity and that might be what what makes them feel rich and awesome inside. So absolutely, that's what they should do.

Same with like the study discussion we had earlier on, if someone somewhere might have a passion just to continually increase that. So that's something that you praise and push someone to do. But when it comes to business, yeah, the hard work scenario, the passion to get it done, and the passion for delivery and just wanting to be in and around everything all the time. It's never been so polarising. Sometimes I feel that if you're an entrepreneur pushing, you can get looked at negatively. With a lot of people running businesses that are growing, it's not, it's not about the money.

Like when Usain Bolt runs a world record, he just wanted to run faster than yesterday, he didn't necessarily want to be the fastest ever, he just wanted to run faster than the day before. And it's over 10 and 20 years to get to get to that point. So it's, it's the same with entrepreneurs and growing businesses, especially businesses with a focus on growth. If you grow 5%, or 20%, or 50%, that's awesome. The monetary return for a business and entrepreneur is the same as Usain Bolt. When you look right across the sphere, someone studying, someone running a charity, someone being an awesome family person and having 10 Kids and devoting their life to their kids, I think all of those people have the same mindset. Ultimately they have the same desire to do one thing, and that is to just be the absolute best.

If your absolute best in business, hopefully, some some returns come in money, but (in my case) you don't start out going I want to make this much money. You just start out in, in a business and industry that you like and you want to develop and then hopefully then with your results, desire and your passion that monies are returned. Because ultimately in business that's that's the gold medal. I always like to be clear that it's not greed or money driven. It's more passionate to just do better.

### **Derek Stewart**

That's a great segue into the next question, which is for someone who's young 18 to 21 today, and they're unsure of what to do, which way to go, maybe they are between high school and uni, apprenticeship, study, work, and they have got different interests like yourself, different people telling them what to do. Looking back on your life and all the things you've done, what advice would you give that person that sort of transition phase from sort of teenagehood to adulthood?

### **Brett Birkill**

I would I definitely wouldn't wait too long. Learning on the job and working with good people and pushing along then opens another door that you can never plan for. So whilst all these other things we've discussed are important, and don't wait. If there's something there that you want to achieve go for it. You're never too young and there's always lots of good people when you're driving and pushing that will want to come along for the ride. They might be far more mature and just have a lot of understanding and they look back and they go gee, I was like that 30 years ago and they want to help you.

There's just going to be so many knock backs and there's going to be so many people who will be hesitant, not want you to take the risk. Often they can be people that are very close to you. Sometimes it can be a comment driven by love and just a passion for understanding you as a person and not wanting not wanting to see you get hurt. So that's a part of business, of course. Like, there's lots of little things that go wrong. And you continually come up against challenges. Back to the real estate sales side, the amount of times people say, no they don't want to do it. If you were to sit back and listen to all those no's and not press on, then you'd never achieve anything. So don't wait too long, just cancel and cut out the outside noise.

Take people's advice. But don't let that dictate exactly where you want to end up. Because that advice can can hold you back. The last thing is, of course, the tall poppy syndrome is a big thing. And this may be goes

back to some some of the last comments we're talking about in Australia. It's like, never feel guilty. At that age, or if obviously even further about achieving something great. And if others sort of don't like it, or seem to seem to have attitudes against it, then then so be it. But all of these, all of these things that you achieve in your life, and specifically around business, they're awesome things to work towards. They're awesome things to achieve over time. And unfortunately, there will be noise and there will be people that the wine like that success. And you've just got to cut that out and find the right people that want to be with you.

### **Derek Stewart**

So you as you grew you isolated certain people who, again, maybe didn't see your vision and your ambition, friends or family or did that, again, it's something you've been able to sort of manage as you become more successful running faster and bigger businesses has that like then ambition ramps up hell the wrong way.

### **Brett Birkill**

Yeah, definitely. And that comes back to what we're discussing originally, that's a continual development that continue to change. There are many businesses that are bigger and more successful than us, and the people that they have around them, would certainly have to fit their mould as well. It's a continual development. Unfortunately, there's going to be negative people around you from time to time that that needs to be trimmed, and then find the next person to work with who's who's on the same wavelength.

### **Derek Stewart**

And being a family businesses has there being friction between you and your wife in terms of ambition, one of you is more ambitious than the other. I know, again, you're mentioning sort of your wife helping to motivate you to change sort of businesses and industries. But I mean, that's a common point of friction for sort of husband and wife businesses, Has that ever happened? Or are you both pushing each other to sort of greater heights and you're fairly aligned in terms of growth and ambitions, the business?

### **Brett Birkill**

So one thing that's been great is we don't always agree. We don't always have the same exact attitude, and we may see things slightly differently. I think that's healthy. I am absolutely blessed with someone that's wise, and hugely supportive. We originally met professionally and now share both sides of life. But we understand the business's business, and being a director and an owner of a business. We have been able to keep personal life and business life completely separate. So every decision we make, whether whether your attitude is slightly different to mine needs to be in the best interest of the business for the business to succeed long term.

### **Derek Stewart**

Yeah, and already running one of the fastest growing new businesses in Australia have massive success, like so for all the ups and downs, what does the sort of five to 10 year you know, medium term vision or sort of future goals look like for you?

### **Brett Birkill**

It's, possibly pretty boring, because I don't want to change. I don't have a desire to, to move industries or move out of this. We, want to develop long term, continual property growth strategy. We're passionate about being property developers, and we want to do things better and better. So the answer is, what we've already been doing, but the scale, clearly, we want to increase. We want to work with more people and to be involved with more buyers, and end consumers. So it's just a multiplying of this similar sort of business model. But that is our aim in five or 10 years, we want the brand to be bigger, and stronger. We want to stand by our name, we want our homes to be liked and loved when when they move in. But ultimately, we want to have a process where we have as good and better product tomorrow, but we're just doing more of it.

### **Derek Stewart**

Are there any other aspects of the real estate property construction space, but you would sort of expand into or again, or will you stick mainly on development?

**Brett Birkill**

So there's different sectors within property development. So that's certainly something that we have a keen eye on. Then sometimes it's just difficult to find properties in areas that work for all those key factors. Then there's other there's other sectors like there's rental side, the finance side. So there's is a lot of moving parts within the property sector. And we certainly have an eye on developing some of those as time goes on.

Ultimately, the core part of the business, we still see as building, developing and selling. The rentals and the finances is something that we've already got on the cards and we'll certainly develop it to over the coming years.

**Derek Stewart**

Excellent. Any final thoughts?

**Brett Birkill**

We've covered a fair bit Derek, I think. Hopefully you've seen that I don't believe is there's just nothing that there can't be achieved. I truly believe that and hopefully then others can take bits and pieces of this. We're very grateful to live in a great country and property is a big part of Australia and Australians. We really enjoy seeing people develop and also achieve lots of great things in their lives as well. And whether I'm 20 years old or 40, I really don't see myself changing too much as the years go on. And it's just that it's just that burning desire to try and continually improve is what we want for Birkill Developments and our customers and our partners and everyone we work with.

**Derek Stewart**

Perfect. Brett, thanks so much for coming on the show.

**Brett Birkill**

Beauty. Derek. Thank you, mate.