

**Submission
No 133**

**ADEQUACY OF THE REGULATION OF SHORT-TERM
HOLIDAY LETTING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name Suppressed

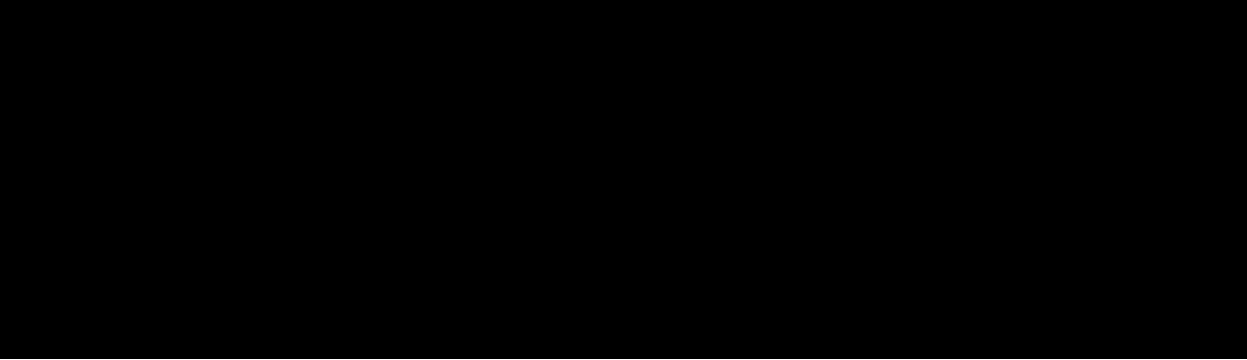
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Partially Confidential

To whom it may concern, Parliamentary inquiry into holiday letting

As residents of Byron Bay we are impacted by increasing amounts of holiday letting around us in residential areas.

Below is a copy of a letter which we wrote to Byron Shire Council at this time last year when they were trying to make a new Development Control Plan that included holiday letting, and our submission follows the letter.



Dear Mayor and Councillors,

Re: short term holiday let draft plan

No doubt there are many issues and legalities of planning that councils need to follow when making new control plans such as a holiday let plan, not to mention the financial stakeholders who seem to have a big say.

The biggest issue that you have not addressed in the new draft plan, although you have mentioned it in the preface, is the advent of house swapping over the internet and airbnb.

While you have cited two examples of Council intervention for large loud parties, it does not address the day-to-day and week-to-week erosion of lifestyle for residents, especially obvious with the use of internet bookings and airbnb.

We live in an area that has had a few approved bed and breakfast facilities, but with the easiness of becoming a B and B host online, we have been surrounded by them.

Some of our observations-

There are the constant comings and goings of extra cars and airport buses, early and late, slamming their doors and beeping their horns.

And then the holiday makers spend all of their time on the deck, hours and hours, getting louder and louder; or jumping and screaming in the pool, often beginning early in the morning and going until late at night- it's constant.

Then the 'changeover' cleaning comes, once, twice or more often each week. They are on a tight schedule so they spend their three or four hours slamming doors and pool gates over and over, and yelling instructions to each other. The cleaners might be residents but they have little respect for neighbours.

Once the cleaning is finished, the new holiday makers come in and spend the first hours checking the property, opening and slamming every door and gate, and yelling excitedly.

It's like Groundhog Day, every time some group moves in and out.

Not to mention, we never know who is in our street, or in the house next door, or in the other B and Bs in our street; it truly has been very fragmenting in our little area.

Our next door neighbours turned their cottage into airbnb six months ago after they built their new House and garage/Studio at the back of the block. The studio is also airbnb.

Here are a few 'choice' 'conversations' from the last months of airbnb next door-

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

BnB development should not be same as residential development as it has different impact on neighbours- eg a deck and pool passed on complying development is used differently by residents than it's used by holidaymakers- you know that a young family isn't going to be on the deck and using the pool from early morning until late night, seven days per week; it might be noisy daily for a couple of hours with a residential family, not all day every day and into the night. Also, you know that pool use and deck use will change over time as the family grows. NOT with holidaymakers.

A 'short term holiday let' seems to have a time limit on it ie 90 days per year, but BnBs are 24/7/ 365 days per year.

The owners next door have built a 3m masonry and stud wall between their new house and the BnB cottage which are at opposite ends of the block. We are just 3 metres from their BnB deck and pool, both built as close as possible to the boundary on complying development as a residential house. Because the pool and deck are so close to our living and sleeping areas we cannot open our windows on the eastern or northern side of our house without disruption from the BnB, have had very few days/ nights without holidaymakers, the result being that we do not feel comfortable in our own yard, different people all the time, looking in on us, and with the continuous noise we are like prisoners in our own home.

All these BnBs are businesses located in residential areas, taking advantage of residential ratepayers, once again.

And how does a residence become a B&B without a DA and notification to neighbours?

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

We received a reply from the Mayor saying that BnBs would be different to short term holiday letting, but we cannot see how they can comply when everything is done through apps over wifi; not to mention the multitude of extra houses and apartments that are on internet platforms like Airbnb.

Holidaymakers use accommodation differently. Whereas we want to come home from work to rest and have a peaceful evening or weekend, holidaymakers are using their accommodation for recreation and partying. You can walk down any street in a 'quiet residential area' and pick out the holiday lets- groups are on the deck drinking and yelling (or even talking and laughing loudly) from morning to night, or slamming doors, or yelling in pools. Who else in a 'quiet residential' area is on the deck with their music blasting at 9am on a Sunday morning? No-one but holiday makers! Or if it's your neighbour it's likely to be a one-off, not constant with each new group that moves in. Also, once the air conditioners come on they stay on; and pool and spa motors can be going for 12 hours per day to cater for tenants' wants.

And there is rarely enough parking – below are just a couple of examples of our neighbour's holiday let.

Not only does this disrupt the neighbourhood, the fact that so many people are accommodated in a small family home must put extra burden on water, sewerage and other community infrastructures.

Council staff advise little, except to say phone the police when it's noisy. The police either don't come in time, or treat them too gently- "oh your MTV is a little too loud", when it's been going all day and still going at midnight. Or it gets worse after the police go because they think it's a joke.

We find it an insult when the owners say on their websites that "they were the perfect guests and would be welcome back any time" after they have been screaming and yelling in the pool at 10 or 11 at night, or their children have been running around on the decks swearing for a week.

A proposed residential subdivision in west Byron has a condition of 'no holiday letting' - how can this stipulation be made in one area, and not other residential areas? And also, due to internet bookings, it cannot be complied with or controlled.

We don't want to be friendly with these people because there are so many comings and goings and they are so disruptive to our neighbourhood. It has been very divisive in our little area.

We can't understand why holidaymakers want to choose to holiday in a 'quiet residential area' and then spend all of their time wrecking the amenity of the neighbourhood.

It's happening all over Australia in every little town - how many properties are on airBnB and similar websites in Byron Bay alone?

And it seems like every house that's sold and bought in Byron Bay becomes a big renovation and is then turned into a holiday let.

We realize that this submission is of our personal experience, but we have been surrounded by BandBs and holiday letting in the last decade. We know that it's not just us that holiday letting has affected in this period of time, and that many residents have similar or worse experiences. We hope that some good can come out of the inquiry for the protection of residential areas.

Yours sincerely,

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