

MEDIA RELEASE

Neighbours Not Strangers – Stop Short-Term Lets

Short-Term Letting operators talk about *our homes* and *lives* and *rights to affordable, safe, stable housing* as commodities that must be shared without limit in a global economy. Residents call this '*stealing*'.

With record numbers of homeless right across our State - the majority of whom are women and children - the explosion in commercial short-term letting of residential properties by the likes of *Airbnb* and *Stayz* is devastating for those seeking affordable residential housing and a home life within a community.

01 October 2015: at the behest of the Council of the City of Sydney, the *NSW Land and Environment Court (LEC)* placed Orders on a Sydney residential building banning short-term letting. Included was a **Penal Notice** threatening *imprisonment, sequestration of property and a fine (\$1.1 million)* for any breach of the Orders.

Several State Politicians and senior Legal professionals were involved in the short-term letting operation. The Orders brought to an end 18-years of unrelenting disruption, exorbitant financial cost and repeated threats to resident/owners and tenants living in the building.

09 November 2015: the City of Sydney made recommendations to the NSW State Parliament that, State-wide, short-term letting of residential properties be classed as '*Exempt Development*', meaning anyone, anywhere, anyhow can rent out or book any type of property for as short as 30-minutes - there are already plenty of websites offering this 'service' for your home - without seeking permission from Sydney or any other Council.

According to a recent article^[1]: "...any protections for owners who don't want holiday lets...were "blown out of the water" by City of Sydney's submissions, according to a (NSW Parliamentary hearing) committee insider".

And should neighbours have reasons for complaint - and by heavens they DO – any change to current legislation will probably see one having to navigate an unworkable legal structure in an effort to seek relief.

It is appalling to think that **NSW 'world's best' legislation and case law on short-term lets, Fire & Rescue and Disability Legislation, plus Planning and Zoning etc, will probably be lost.** The coastal regions of NSW and our inner-city areas, if they aren't already, will be the exclusive domains for millionaire holidaymakers.

Planning and Zoning Legislation is only as good as the enforcement behind it. If there is no enforcement, what is the good of having any legislation? **It comes down to trust in Legislators to enforce the law...and if they won't enforce, they might as well not be there.**

An advertisement offering short-term lets next door to Malcolm Turnbull's home^[2] disappeared almost immediately after it came to light. **Malcolm doesn't want a party house next door to him - neither do we!**

The NSW Land and Environment Court has repeatedly and consistently judged mixing short-term letting with permanent residential occupancy "Fundamentally Incompatible".

Across Sydney, 20,000 *Airbnb* Listings - Lisa has 156 Sydney *Airbnb* listings, Vincent 136, Kirstie 43...

"Australia is the most penetrated market in the world." Airbnb's Sam McDonogh. An interesting choice of words Sam!

Who in NSW is mapping the eviction of tenants and the displacement of essential workers? No one!

Affordable, safe and stable housing is a basic human right. **Neighbours Not Strangers** - our community action group - has been formed with the intention of providing a voice to those wanting to preserve the integrity of our homes, neighbourhoods and supply of safe and affordable residential housing.

PLEASE SIGN OUR PETITION TODAY!

<https://www.communityrun.org/petitions/stop-short-term-lets-neighbours-not-strangers-2>