

We live in a highly desirable area of the Gold Coast hinterland, among million dollar-plus acreage homes which have been devalued and demeaned by a number of large short term rental properties close by.

When these short term rentals started up approximately six years ago we were aghast that they advertised they could accommodate huge numbers as large as 22, 18 and 16.

Our worst fears were realised when they immediately became party/function venues. There was a flood of bucks' and hens' weekends, weddings, big birthday celebrations and conferences with all the attendant drunken behavior, extra traffic etc.

We residents asked how this could possibly be allowed, given that previously these were homes to families of normal size going about normal every day activities. Indeed, until the party houses opened we had only two weddings in the neighbourhood in 20 years. Now there has been hundreds.

Insalubrious parties have brought in a criminal element to our previously safe neighbourhood. To mention just

two of many occurrences, Police will confirm one house close to one of these party houses was torched and burned to the ground [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Thanks to these short term rentals/party houses, each weekend you have no idea who is coming into your street and what they will get up to.

This use has continued unabated despite constant neighbourhood complaints to council, State Government and Police and petitions to have them closed down.

They have it seems slipped through the net of council regulations, which given that proprietors of other function/wedding venues have to jump through many regulatory hoops at great cost, seems quite incredible.

Hopefully these proposed amendments to planning regulations will fix this situation which has caused great stress to many, many law-abiding residents on the Gold Coast and other places.

However our contention is that due to the size of the properties in our neighbourhood there should be no short term rental allowed at all because of the large numbers that have been able to be accommodated by the addition of extra bedrooms and the use of servants' quarters with beds even placed in the living room of these quarters so that large rents can be charged for large numbers (up to \$2,000 a night, and it is said, \$5,000 if there is a wedding).

Make no mistake these are large and profitable businesses being operated without regulation.

We submit:

- 1) These houses are not short term rental houses they are full blown businesses/function centres and private resorts.

- These houses are larger than some small hotels and they are catering for large numbers of unrelated tenants and their guests on a regular basis.
- These houses are too expensive for normal family holidays and only survive by having large groups of people for functions which despoil the quality of life of neighbours.
- These homes were built as houses. They were not designed to cope with wedding or functions with 50 to 100 guests on what are domestic patios.
- They have none of the fire safety features to allow a large group of people to escape safely in a case of a fire.
- These houses are functioning as boarding houses and function centres without any of the checks and balances in place.
- These houses are functioning on domestic septic systems designed for a family of five or so, not large groups on a regular basis.

2) Short term accommodation licences have been issued by the council without limits or due diligence to protect the neighbours or guests at these houses.

- There is no control of the number of guests and type and frequency of functions.
- No control of the structural ability of decks to cope with large number of guests.
- No control of the ability of septic tanks to cope with large number of guests.
- No consideration to the fact this is a high risk bush fire area yet fireworks have been let off at functions.

3) These houses do not comply with the provisions of the BCA Building Code of Australia

- The BCA states that a rental house larger than 300 square metres or rented to more than 12 unrelated people is classified as Class 3 = Boarding House or backpackers.

- This in turn requires an MCU to look at the number of guests, traffic, parking, noise and fire safety as well as determine head works charges.
- Council is ignoring the BCA by assuming that these houses are being rented to one family. This is blatantly not the case, the guests are not related, they are certainly not one family and hence should be classified as Class 3 use.
- Council is ignoring the purpose of the BCA Class 3 provision, which is to protect the safety of the occupants in case of a fire as well as to protect the neighbours from unregulated businesses in residential areas.

We all moved here for a quiet life away from business activity and the constant presence of strangers.

We support your attempt to give this amenity back to us.