

Yamba Residents Action Group Information

Geoffrey Beresford, main representative

Owns 2 Taine Court, purchased in 2015.

Trish Burt, a member

Facebook Post 6th October 2017

An open message to all residents of Yamba, Angourie, Iluka and townships in the Clarence Valley. Our group was formed to preserve the unique lifestyle the Clarence Valley offers its residents. We came together after we found the Clarence Valley Council ignoring its own regulations and allowing various houses to be used for commercial purposes contrary to residential zoning regulations. That is, houses let as short term holiday homes in R2 low density residential areas, which is not permitted under zoning regulations. The result is residents have to put up with party houses throughout the year. Residents have experienced abuse, assaults, excessive noise, trespass etc. Real Estate agents know these houses are illegal but continue to rent them, but worse they sell houses knowing that houses next door are let illegally but fail to disclose this bit of information. With the growth of Airbnb and other websites, the number of these holiday houses is quickly growing. Look what has happened in Byron Bay, where they are overrun with these illegal houses.

Clarence Valley Councillors have voted to enforce low density zoning regulations and have sent letters to owners advising them they cannot let their houses on a short term holiday basis and if they continue, they face a \$3000.00 fine or prosecution. However, the council's planning department will put a recommendation to council to support a proposal by the NSW Government to allow this type of commercial activity in low density residential areas. Further, recommend taking action only when there is "serious impact on the community".

Our group has identified over 60 holiday houses in breach of council's regulations. This type of business impacts on the legitimate hotel, motel, caravan parks and similar accommodation providers who spend large sums of money complying with fire/safety/health & safety regulations. When illegal holiday homes are let, legitimate businesses are missing out.

Ask yourself this, how many things can you do without council permission? Didn't you apply for approval when you built your house, added a garage, deck, pool or new driveway? The owners of illegal short term holiday homes didn't ask for approval because they knew it was illegal.

I'm sure there are owners out there who didn't know they were breaching regulations and council should have addressed this far earlier through a simple information package. I know there are owners out there who have now become aware and have opted to rent their houses on a long term basis. Which is correct and fair to all concerned.

The closing down of this activity will have no negative impact on our local tourism industry (an industry this group strongly supports). When these houses are let on a long term basis, long term tenants spend more money in the town throughout the year than tourists. And in the main, long term tenants care and contribute to our community.

Yamba and other towns in the Clarence Valley have sufficient tourists accommodation. At peak times when the accommodation providers are at full capacity, then that has been determined as the maximum that infrastructure can cope with. That's why we have the current balance of planning zones.

Council should always recognise the rights and amenity of its residents as a priority. That's what our group is trying to achieve.

With the current housing shortage and critical shortage in long term rental accommodation it is vital that the business of illegal holiday houses be stopped and not allowed to exist regardless of any potential change the state government may propose. When illegal commercial operations like these holiday houses are allowed to exist and increase the very fabric of our community is at risk. If you are affected by this illegal activity, wouldn't you rather have a neighbour and not a stranger invading you throughout the year? If so, please have your say on this page or better still let the council know your thoughts via their webpage.

<https://www.pressreader.com/australia/the-daily-examiner/20171026/281895888491438>

<https://www.dailyexaminer.com.au/news/residents-threaten-court-action-against-council/3143576/>

<https://www.property-safe.com.au/who-is-to-blame-for-yamba-balcony-collapse/>

<https://www.neighboursnotstrangers.com/single-post/2017/06/29/AIRBNB-COUNCILS-MUST-ACT-OR-RESIDENTS-TO-SEEK-COMPENSATION>

<https://www.facebook.com/yambaforever/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Yamba-Residents-Action-Group-1239772966127572/>