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Coal Point Progress Association Inc.  
PO Box 329, Toronto



Ph. 0438 59 6741 E:[coalpointprogress@gmail.com](mailto:coalpointprogress@gmail.com)  
<http://coalpointprogress.blogspot.com.au/>



Director Housing Policy  
Department of Planning and Environment  
GOP Box 39  
Sydney NSW 2001  
[STHL@planning.nsw.gov.au](mailto:STHL@planning.nsw.gov.au)

6<sup>th</sup> October 2017

## Short Term Holiday Letting (STHL):

### Response to the Options Paper *Short Term Holiday Letting in NSW* (July 2017)

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to Short Term Holiday Letting (STHL) in NSW Options Paper July 2017

On behalf of the local community of a very picturesque lakeside community I am responding to the increased concerns about the increasing impacts of STHL on the local amenity and neighbourliness of a place we call home.

Unlike city-based STHL where visitors go out to enjoy the surrounding area, our lakeside community is the destination point where the visitors recreate and relax at the venue, bringing in the necessary supplies to lubricate their enjoyment of the area.

The Coal Point-Carey Bay area is a residential zone that has always had a number of onsite host B&Bs that have quietly co-existed amongst the community generating an income stream for the owners and supporting local businesses. This permissible usage in a residential zoning is accepted.

The rise of online booking systems and investor-owner income streams for absentee hosts is changing the nature of the clientele and the community impacts. Without a host on site the arrangement constitutes a serviced apartment, as such it is not permissible in a residential zone. It is incompatible to have tourist-zone impacts in a residential area not designed for such. The increasing number of Party Houses are often excessively loud, accommodate an increased number of people for which the house is not designed which impacts on parking and privacy. These tourist zone impacts compromise the amenity and ambience of a family-centric neighbourhood.

To avoid the increasing impacts of STHL on a residential community of neighbours the following recommendations on the Options Paper are submitted.

### Industry Regulation is required.

All businesses have some form of industry regulation. The more the industry impacts on those around its field of operation the greater the level of industry compliance required.

As STHL is operating in a residential zone the impacts on the surrounding families needs to be regulated. Self-regulation will not affect a solution to the problems associated with having tourists impacting on a residential zone.

An independent government body that has the capacity to monitor the occupancy levels, enforce compliance and issue fines is required, as would be expected of any business that operates at the scale and spread of the STHL industry.

### Regulation through the Planning System

People purchase a house in a low or medium density residential zone because they desire the amenity and friendliness associated with familiarity of neighbours and a home context, otherwise they would live in a business or tourist zone. It is unreasonable to change the nature and the expectations of the zoning to accommodate solely business enterprises.

If SHTL is to be a part of the residential schema then it is imperative that the values and amenity of the residential zoning are maintained. This could be achieved by having Complying, Exempt and Prohibited regulation criteria as outlined below.

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#### Exempt Development would be when the STHL

- Is registered and has a licence
- The owners live on site
- There are no more than 4 guests on site at any one time

#### Complying Development would be when the STHL

- Is registered and have licence
- The owners do not live on site
- There are no more than four (4) guests on site.
- The use is limited to 30 nights per year

#### Development Application would be when

- The owners do not live on site
- There are more than 4 guests on site
- The host wants to operate greater than 30 days per year

#### Prohibited Development (In Residential Zones)

More than ten (10) guests on site should be prohibited in residential zones as – this is getting to the size where guests should be accommodated in Tourist Zones.

#### A Metropolitan approach

The options paper aims to differentiate between metropolitan and regional areas. With the transition of our area to 'Hunter City' the metropolitan criteria should be applied, as it is inconsistent to be touting the area to be metropolitan and the second largest city in NSW on one hand, but still allowing a regional context in which to develop and promote business on the other.

#### 30 Day Limits to the number of total days per year

In a residential zone there is an expectation that you will be able to enjoy the amenity and solitude of your home. Within this context one has to consider how much disruption to privacy and amenity is reasonable.

I would suggest as part of complying development no more than 30 days be acceptable. This is still almost every fortnight, or once a month, which would be a significant impost on neighbours.

Limiting visitor days is consistent with standards adopted in cities around the world and AirBnB's own data which states "*majority of hosts made their properties available for 25 nights each year, on average, and generated about \$4500 of income*".

#### The Community Ethic of STHL

AirBnB founder Brian Chesky states "At the heart of our mission is the idea that people are fundamentally good and every community is a place where you can belong".

It is fundamental to our community that all who have chosen to live here on a permanent basis still feel that they belong, know their neighbours and can enjoy a home that they have emotionally and financially invested in.

On-site hosts provide continuity of community context. Non-resident investor driven hosting is compromising the integrity of our community.

#### In summary

- Industry regulation is required as self-regulation by non-resident hosts is a conflict of interest
- There needs to be a planning framework to protect the intent of residentially zoned land
- A metropolitan approach is warranted as the region transitions to Hunter City
- 30 day annual limits for non-resident hosts will ensure community amenity is maintained
- The amenity and privacy of existing community of residents and families should not be compromised by solely business enterprises in a residential zone.

Regards

Suzanne Pritchard  
President/Secretary

Coal Point Progress Association

