

UNDER THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991

BEFORE THE

Hearing Commissioners for the Christchurch City
Council

IN THE MATTER OF

Proposed Plan Change 4: Short-term
Accommodation

**STATEMENT OF BOB PRINGLE IN SUPPORT OF:
THE COALITION FOR SAFER ACCOMMODATION IN CHRISTCHURCH**

DATE

20 October 2021

Introduction

Qualifications and Professional Experience

1. My name is Bob Pringle. I am the Owner and operator, in partnership with Zeta, at the Christchurch Classic Motel & Apartments. We are commercial accommodation providers. I have 12 years' experience within the Hospitality Industry as Chairman for the Canterbury Accommodation Sector and in the past as the NZ regional representative for Choice Hotel
2. I am a member of the Coalition for Safer Accommodation in Christchurch (the Coalition) and will address the Coalitions concern over the potential negative residential amenity effects of PC4 as notified and how the relief sought by the coalition will help to mitigate these potential effects.

Social Cohesion

3. In order to have a positive impact on amenity from the perspective of social cohesion, this being the type of community typically found in a residential neighbourhood, PC4 must be robust and have depth when it comes to assessing the potential effects of STRA on this.
4. The cumulative effect of STRA's in neighbourhoods needs to be able to be considered when assessing a Resource Consent application for any unhosted STRA request. Therefore, any conditions of a Resource Consent for unhosted STRA should have a precise and structured direction as to neighbour approval requirements. Not just who can give the approval, but when a wide area should be considered other than just immediate neighbours, in order to encompass the neighbourhood community
5. For example
 - In a multi-story complex, will everyone in the complex need to give approval, or just on your floor, or the floors above you? Will the size of the complex come into play? How many of the surrounding properties will be required to complete one?
 - In a development that is made up of separate units, should all of the properties in the development have to give approval, if not what surrounding properties will need to give their approval?
6. By incorporation this into PC4, and making this a requirement to be assessed for any unhosted STRA it is my opinion that the social cohesion of neighbourhoods will be protected.

Anti-Social Behaviour

7. We have heard from many property companies about the safety procedures that they have in place when it comes to STRA, however this does not reflect the reality of what is happening. The antisocial behaviour occurring in STRA has recently been highlighted here in Christchurch. An out-of-control

party at an Airbnb in a upmarket residential neighbourhood resulted in multiple stabbing and the tragic loss of a young life. In this case, the neighbours were surprised to learn that the property was operating as an Airbnb and even more so that an 18-year-old was able to book the home. Had the STRA providers been required via a restricted discretionary RC process to inform their neighbours they would have been well aware that the party was happening without the owner of the house present and there more than likely would have been a different outcome.

8. Around the same time a motelier had a booking for one of their apartments and when the guest arrived to collect the key, they were surprised as they did not realise the apartment, which was booked via Airbnb, was part of a motel complex. The owners monitored the situation and spent the night turn away additional 'so called party goers, who were high school students.
9. I highlight these two issues but the reality is that unhosted STRA encourages this type of antisocial behaviour. I have appended to my statement a number of articles detailing these types of incidents but I note that these are not even the tip of the iceberg. In its current form PC4 lacks the ability to enforce conditions on STRA providers when the potential antisocial behaviour will negatively impact residential amenity.
10. Although there is only relatively small number of documented complaints because of disturbances etc there has been no weight given to hearsay or the impression given at drop-in sessions as to the degree of disturbance to neighbours of STRA. The fact that 1 in 7 STRA operators make insurance claims must give credence to such statements and show the potential if these unhosted activities are allowed to operate without proper consideration.

Conclusion

11. In summary, PC4 as notified does not provide sufficient ability for the Council to control the establishment of STRA when the potential effects on amenity will negatively impact residential environments. It is my belief that for any unhosted STRA that a minimum restricted discretionary activity status will encourage appropriate mitigation of potentially negative effects.

APPENDIX A: Articles Relating to Antisocial STRA

1. **Booze splashed up the walls': Teens book house on Airbnb for party and trash it**
<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/booze-splashed-up-the-walls-teens-book-house-on-airbnb-for-party-and-trash-it/655LYW4U4EPDOPRY3QKQFGIHI/>
2. **Meth bust: Lawyers issue Airbnb warning to NZ homeowners** Police and customs investigators said on Friday that international criminals were using Airbnb and local storage units to establish huge New Zealand drug trafficking rackets. One of those arrested gave his address as being on Auckland's waterfront on Quay St in a group of apartments above retail outlets.
<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/meth-bust-lawyers-issue-airbnb-warning-to-nz-homeowners/RTHTI4KB5ZYWTY2LG4YVW6PU4Y/>
3. **Airbnb offers brothel atonement** The North East Valley property owner and sole occupant, who requested anonymity, said he was on holiday in Asia for a month in July and August and his daughter helped him rent his home to two women through Airbnb. Over that time neighbours saw many men coming in and out of the property, and the hot water system broke from overuse. A plumber who came to fix it described scenes of a brothel.
<https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/airbnb-offers-brothel-atonement>
4. **Auckland teens who trashed Airbnb apartment cause thousands in damage, taunt owner** A group of teenagers who trashed an Airbnb after holding a drunken party are now taunting the property owner on social media. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/auckland-teens-who-trashed-airbnb-apartment-cause-thousands-in-damage-taunt-owner/IT4LICAVPRZE2I6PLO2EL5UFUU/?ref=readmore>
5. **Luxury Upper Hutt Airbnb trashed in covert all-night party** It took three people seven hours to clean the house, and he expected that between fixing the damage and hiring a skip bin for the rubbish, the cost would be in the thousands of dollars. He also had to personally apologise to neighbours, at least one of whom had laid a noise complaint with Upper Hutt City Council. **But it was not until his property was tagged in an Instagram post that he was alerted to the possibility it was more than just a single out-of-hand party. "Step 1," the post read, "Rent a mansion on Airbnb. Step 2. Invite two hostels. Step 3. Get three DJs. Congratulations, you've just thrown yourself a kick ass party." He was now worried the organiser was running parties as a business, inviting young people from local youth hostels and charging entry.**
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/travel/travel-troubles/122757866/luxury-upper-hutt-airbnb-trashed-in-covert-allnight-party?rm=a>
6. **Auckland apartment death: Woman fell from balcony, police say not suspicious** A woman has fallen to her death from the balcony of an Airbnb apartment being used to host a party – but police say her death is not being treated as suspicious.
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/300129648/auckland-apartment-death-man-filed-scene-after-woman-fell-from-balcony-of-airbnb?fbclid=IwAR08ED0gIOTTuR2EqIPi7DHxKSNrcaowTu5m5CsMgoYGRnYXho5SRbZ5nAM>
7. **Airbnb is great... until you live next door to one** Then I moved into an apartment that just so happened to be next door to an Airbnb. I have to say, it's put me off the whole thing. My inner-city apartment building is small, secure, and as a renter, I pay a lot to live there.
<https://www.stuff.co.nz/travel/travel-troubles/300222879/airbnb-is-great-until-you-live-next-door-to-one>

8. ***But how likely are you to actually suffer property damage or theft as an Airbnb host?
According to a survey by AA Insurance, one in seven hosts report some form of damage to, or
theft from, their property over their leasing journey.***
<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/one-in-seven-kiwi-airbnb-hosts-report-some-form-of-property-damage-theft-survey/OHNUQFIPFG74P4WGWXGADFTR5E/>