

S.T.R.A Submission to the I.P.C. re Byron Shire council STRA

27 Feb 2023

In support of Byron Shire Council recommendation for S.T.R.A zoning plan for Byron Bay surrounds and Byron Shire

Commissioners my name is Donald Maughan, I live at [REDACTED] Suffolk Park and I have been a resident of Byron Bay and Suffolk Park for all of my 73 Years, except for a 5 year period in my early twenties 1970 to 1975 when I lived in Sydney to further my education.

I am now retired from my commercial work life where I was employed by Norco Cop-operative for Forty Years (40 years). I retired at the age of 60 as General Manager of Operations.

I am now deeply engaged with my community and work with several Community based organisations:

President Byron Bay Historical Society (8 years as president)

President of Suffolk Park Progress Association (SPPA 10 years as President)

Co- Chair Byron Bay Town Centre Master Plan Team (6 years Co- Chair)

Member of the Mayoral Round Table Group

Member of Community Association Byron Shire (CABS)

Member of Byron Residents Group (BRG)

I am not involved with any commercial business enterprises.

Together with my wife (in preparation for our senior years) we own a unit in an over 55's complex which has been rented to the Northern Rivers Community housing for the past 8 years at a rate below the commercial rental market price for units in Byron Bay and has never been considered for a STRA. Our one and only tenant is now 96.

My family have lived in Byron Bay since 1921. My parents owned and lived in their baker shop in the town centre corner Marvil and Jonson Streets Byron Bay. My mother was a Byron Bay councillor for 8 years and both my parents were involved in many community organisations over their life Time.

Like all my peers at the time I was raised by the Village of Byron Bay and saw first hand how important a community is to the growth and wellbeing of a Tribe.

Right from the settlement of Byron Bay 1895 our community built and supported its own development. Facilities like Hospital, Surf club, Golf Club, Bowels Club, RSL Club and many other facilities for community. Our town had a very active Pink ladies' committees and a CWA both of which have ceased to operate. At this time our Fire Brigade & Rural Fire Service teams are both under threat due to lack of available younger community members. These functioning community support systems only happen when you have a functioning viable community.

What is happening NOW to the communities in Byron Bay and surrounding village of Suffolk Park and Sunrise Estate is nothing short of an all-out attack by Short Term Rental Accommodation investors. It is fracturing and insidiously destroying our community and the small committee groups that make our community function.

A Community is a living Organism, it needs a critical mass to live and grow nurtured by neighbours who know and support each other. A community needs inter-generational interaction so that the tribe can raise the child. STRA is robbing our community of our most valuable assets.

This argument based around the impact of STRA on our community might seem very ascetic and not as relevant as economic arguments put forward by investors who buy houses then lock out long-term tenants our valuable community members.

Commissioners, with my multi-level long term involvement in the community, I am seeing firsthand what Short Term Rental Accommodation is doing in Suffolk Park and Sunrise Estate. The impact of party houses is not just late night partying but endless repetitive weekend BBQ's with loud music and raucous back yard conversations, overflowing rubbish & numerous vehicle. It's hard not knowing who your neighbours are going to be each week, if they can be trusted, if they will respect your neighbourhood, your privacy and your community plus the loss of supportive neighbour when you or they need help. Neighbourly casual daily interaction, trust and respect are all critical for a community to flourish.

Where is the long-term rental accommodation for the people & families who work in the service industry and support the community, their children to attend our local schools?

With STRA investment expanding into the surrounding mini villages (Suffolk and Sunrise) it is driving up real-estate values making it more and more difficult for young families to stay in our community.

When a Short-Term Rental Accommodation investor buys a house and takes it out of long-term rental, they are not just buying a house, they are buying the foundation stones of our community.

This debate should not be focusing on the rights of investors to turn our community into their cash cow but abouts the rights of community to survive and be protected from external investors who scavenge off the back of those who have made the Bay a wonderful place to live.

While I support the Council proposal to limit the non-hosted STRA to a 90-day cap in the village communities I and many of my communities' families would like to see non-hosted STRA buildings banned from the villages of Suffolk Park and Sunrise communities

Yours Sincerely

Donald Maughan

Ph [REDACTED]

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