

Dear Enquiry,

Please consider the below when you are making a decision on my family's future and the safety of our tourists and our community.

In 2014 my wife and I with our family of now 3 boys decided to invest into the small coastal town of Dunsborough and build a sustainable family business. We always had a connection with the town and this is where we wanted to be long term. Sara a PHD qualified cancer researcher and myself a Master's Degree qualified safety professional decided to give up our day jobs and peruse a new life. We knew that the only way we could all be together and raise our family in Dunsborough was to come with a good business plan.

We began with some market research and decided that we wanted to build an accommodation business that was hands on and provided a personalised service, catering for all people that wanted to experience our lovely part of the world. Our market researched showed that if we build our villas the rental return on investment would allow us to all be together and live in Dunsborough and have a business that supported and showcased the region.

We purchased a rural residential multi zoned 7.5 acre block in Quedjinup that had been ear marked for short term tourism development. We started the long process of council approvals and building applications, insurance, management plans, fire management plans and registering with all the tourism providers. This took about 2 years and was an overhead cost for us to start up; we absorbed this cost as a family in pursuit of a long term plan.

Four years on we have just completed our first full year of business. We have 6 double rooms available across two dwellings so can sleep 12 guests. We employ 2 staff and use 10 -15 local suppliers and contractors in the region to support us and the guests. The business plan and development approval provides for another 2 dwellings bringing the total number of beds to 22. The current total investment in tourism accommodation will be considerable once complete.

We are astounded at the amount of Airbnb's in the area now. When we wrote our business plan, we estimated occupancy rates from 2014/15 of around 47% year round, based on figured supplied by local operators with upper levels at around 65% year round. An increase in houses available for rent in the area over the last 3 -4 years has increased at a rate that was not predicted. This has been a direct result of Airbnb competing with us by over supplying the market with unregistered houses. We operate all year around through the low season to provide high quality safe accommodation options. We are now competing with people who have other jobs that leave their properties and go and stay in caravan parks so they can capitalize on this unregulated phenomenon by renting their houses out at a considerably lower prices. They can do this as they have minimal overheads and do not have to account for low seasons and pay licences, rates and taxes associated with short term accommodation.

Moreover, fire management should be at the forefront of councils concerns. Without proper registration and regulation comes lack of compliant fire management in bush fire prone zones. This is a serious issue as it puts us all at risk.

The reality is that if something is not done to manage this through regulation and enforcement of the regulations we will not complete our tourism project as intended. The likelihood is that the land will not be used in the best way as intended by council planning and we will drop out of the tourism market. Like many registered legitimate operators in the area we will be forced to close the doors

and potentially return to the city and resume our original jobs. The support to suppliers and local contractors will also be effected.

To summarise

- We comply with all tourism compliance costs, regulatory burdens and licensing responsibilities that is considerable once it is added up. – unregistered Airbnb houses do not!
- We pay all the required taxes a commercial entity incurs; Payroll, Local Government rates, GST, corporate tax, accountancy cost etc. - Airbnb do not!
- We pay higher rates for , water, electricity, sewage, parking, etc.) - Airbnb do not!
- Our build costs were higher as we had to meet WAPC and local conditions for tourism operation. - Airbnb do not!
- We provide a year round option for tourism - most Airbnb's do not!
- We support local tourism through promotion and levy's - Airbnb do not!

For us to remain viable regulation must address immediately the unfair playing field that has been allowed to develop.

1. All properties must be registered, with identification and fee payable to fund compliance monitoring.
2. Short stay accommodation must meet fire, safety, building and insurance requirements appropriate to all other accommodation providers.
3. All OTA's platforms to stop listing illegal and non-compliant rentals and share relevant data with authorities.
4. Residential zones and long-term rentals must be protected. Neighbours must be empowered and allowed to have a say.

To close I can't understand why the local council has allowed this illegal flaunting of legislation surrounding short term accommodation. They have a duty of care to the public and tourists to enforce the legislation and provide regulated safe options for short term stays. Unwanted media surrounding incidents involving tourists is not good business for the region or WA tourism.

Thanks for hearing my families story and concerns for our region and business.



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