

## Heritage HOTEL: QLDC Hearing September 7, 2018

### Airbnb: A Queenstown Host's Perspective

#### About me: Judy Bryant

My name is Judy Bryant. I'm Australian, but please don't hold that against me.

I first visited Queenstown in 1975 and vowed to return here and live one day.

20 years later, in 1995, my husband and I bought our first property here.

During the past 28 years, I have lived in Hanoi, Vietnam for 6 years; in Manila, Philippines for 7 years; and in Beijing, China, for 8 years.

Our working life was in Asia, but our home, when we had holidays, was in Queenstown.

Every year for those past 20 years we lived in Asia, my children returned not to Australia, but to Queenstown for their 9 week international school break each and every year.

To them, Queenstown was home. Now, they are adults, their children (my grandchildren) are spending their holidays in Queenstown. It is a special place in our lives.

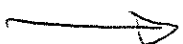
#### About our role as Airbnb hosts

\* When we are not holidaying in our Queenstown house, we enable visitors to enjoy it as Airbnb accommodation. We have done this for two years. Our house has a garden, a fully equipped kitchen which can cater to dinner party level, and private garage parking for two cars. We provide accommodation of the nature not currently offered by other commercial establishments such as hotels and bed and breakfasts.

\* After living in Asia for more than 20 years, I know what our many Asian guests require in their holiday accommodation. We provide each guest group with a bottle of Otago wine, and a sample of local provisions. We recommend local restaurants and wineries they can explore and provide a list of local shops and businesses through which they can enjoy a range of local food and activities. We also recommend local specialist grocery shops, such as the Asian and Indian shops where our guests can find the ingredients they need to cook the food they enjoy in their own countries. That is especially true of our Asian guests, and particularly our guests who have dietary and religious needs, such as finding Halal foods to prepare some meals at home. We research and recommend restaurants and cafes as well that cater to cultural dietary needs, such as Halal foods.

\*My airbnb offers families an affordable group accommodation option which is not offered by other non-airbnb establishments.

\* As a host, I have immediate and complete control over which guests I feel are suitable for my house and the surrounding environs. I can immediately deal with any issues (though I've never encountered any) and I can ensure from reading reviews that my guests are thoroughly evaluated for suitability before I allow them to book. Were I renting my house longterm, this would not be possible and certainly the level of care and attention to tenants' behaviour would not be as great as I can afford as an Airbnb host.



\* Being an Airbnb host provides employment for local Queenstown residents. This employment offers local workers flexibility as I work in conjunction with their availability.  
Through my airbnb I employ: a gardener, a cleaner, a house manager, a regular landscaper, a gas supplier, and a linen provider, and house, landlord's and liability insurance through a Queenstown broker, among others.

Our house is registered with QLDC as a holiday home, and, therefore we pay higher rates. We declare the income from our Airbnb on our Australian tax return through declaring our worldwide income. We also declare our Airbnb income on our New Zealand tax return.

If my house were not an airbnb property, I would NOT rent my house out short term through an agent. Airbnb enables me to be in full control of how my house is managed and how guests are chosen. In short, our house would be empty for most of the year and the local people we now employ would not be paid as they are now.

Airbnb allows me to holiday in my house when I want. When I'm not in residence, airbnb guests offset my expenses.

Were I not able to Airbnb my house, I would NOT allow my house to be available for longterm rental. Airbnb allows me to holiday at my home and to offset the costs of the substantial amount money I spend on my holidays in Queenstown with income from guests who also spend money in Queenstown when they stay at my house.

In their proposed regulation of short term accommodation in the new District Plan, QLDC needs to strike a more favourable balance to hosts in regulating Airbnbs operating in Queenstown than their proposed District Plan currently outlines. I ask that Council consider the many benefits in terms of income to the local economy, and amenity to guests, particularly international guests, that Airbnb brings in its niche position in the accommodation market in Queenstown.