

COMMENT IN RESPONSE TO BYRON SHIRE ECHO: "[Increase in council development powers on the agenda as housing crisis deepens](#)".

**11 March 2021**

I agree wholeheartedly with the Council Staff Report that identifies the fall out as a result of the Council's hands being tied due to "the state planning framework and the constraints in which local government operates...". I also agree that New South Wales' outdated and failing housing policy is giving rise to this chronic shortage of affordable housing, and leaving Byron locals seeking refuge in cars or on couches or being forced to search for alternative accommodation on the coast of Northern New South Wales.

My frustration comes from the fact that the solution to this affordable housing crisis is within the Byron Shire Council's grasp if they would/could adopt simple policy changes, like their northern beachside cousin, Noosa Shire, that go to the heart of the issue of long-term accommodation shortages in beach-side communities. These policies have already proven they help boost affordable accommodation supply in other beach-side communities, like Noosa and the Gold Coast.

These beachside communities, under the pressure of housing affordability shortages due to the mass migration to the beaches during Covid, have recently adopted a housing policy to legally convert a 4-5 bedroom house to micro apartments (each with own bathroom and kitchenette) to address a serious accommodation mismatch in supply and demand.

If more attention was given to this simple policy change that would enable mum and dad investors with 4-5 bedroom properties – many of which are listed as short-term accommodation options (and heavily reliant on seasonal demand and borders staying opening) - to co-living long-term rentals, not only would the landlords get a sizeable increase in their rental yield (average 60% more a week) for every week in the year, they would also be able to provide affordable accommodation to the increasing number of singles and couples desperately seeking quality, secure, long-term accommodation. This would then free up demand for larger-style housing for families.

The best part is that this solution could make a difference in a matter of weeks – a far cry from many of the other solutions being touted that would take years and drain the public purse.

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