

When Tourists Move In: How Should Urban planners Respond to Airbnb

Last Modified on 01/07/2019 4:23 pm CEST

Authors: Nicole Gurran and Peter Phibbs

Date published: 5 January 2017

Research commissioned by: The University of Sydney

Why did we select this research?

The online accommodation platform Airbnb has expanded globally, raising substantial planning and regulatory concerns. Housing affordability pressures afflict the world's major cities, while spare capacity within existing dwellings lies untapped. The share economy can address both of these problems by releasing latent space within existing buildings through services such as Airbnb. Critics, however argue that Airbnb has enabled tourism accommodations to penetrate residential neighbourhoods, which creates conflicts between visitors and residents, displacing permanent accommodation in high-demand cities and exacerbating affordability pressures for low-income groups.

Key findings

- Planners and policymakers in cities with increasing numbers of Airbnb rentals need to review how well local planning controls manage the neighbourhood nuisances, traffic and parking problems that may be associated with them while acting to protect the permanent rental housing supply.
- Local planners need to ensure that zoning and residential development controls distinguish between different forms of short-term Airbnb accommodation listings and their potential impacts on neighbourhoods and housing markets
- In areas of high Airbnb visitation, there is growing concern over tourist behavior in residential neighbourhoods and apartment buildings, particularly when whole homes or apartments are offered by absent hosts on a

permanent or semipermanent basis.

- All planning efforts should be supported by a strong policy framework for monitoring the impact of Airbnb rentals on the availability and cost of lower-cost permanent rental accommodations, and ongoing research and analysis to fully understand implications for local neighbourhoods and housing markets.

References

Gurran, N., & Phibbs, P. (2017). When tourists move in: how should urban planners respond to Airbnb?. *Journal of the American planning association*, 83(1), 80-92.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01944363.2016.1249011?src=recsys>
