

**Before the Hearings Panel  
For the Queenstown Lakes Proposed District Plan**

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Under The Resource Management Act 1991 ('RMA')

In the matter of The Open Space and Recreation / District Wide Hearing Stream  
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**Summary Statement of evidence of Brent Gregory Thomas for Airbnb  
– Corporate (submitter 2390 and further submission 2768)**

Dated 25 September 2018

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## May it please the Commissioners

- 1 My name is Brent Gregory Thomas and I am Airbnb's Head of Policy for Australia and New Zealand. This statement provides a summary of my evidence in chief. Airbnb lodged submissions and further submissions opposing the Proposed District Plan Stage 2 – Visitor Accommodation provisions in their entirety and sought the deletion of the proposed provisions.
- 2 The proposed residential visitor accommodation ('RVA') provisions will have a significant impact on the ability of Airbnb hosts to operate within the Queenstown-Lakes. The Council has been unable to point to any clear evidence that the provisions are necessary to address effects on residential amenity or cohesion. Similarly, the Council is unable to quantify the effect that RVA is having on long-term rental availability and housing affordability. Therefore, there is no basis to conclude that the provisions will result in the outcome that the Council seeks.
- 3 As Mr Heyes acknowledges, the growth in the RVA sector is not necessarily the reason for all of the properties listed on RVA platforms being unavailable for long-term rentals. Properties will not automatically become available for long term rental accommodation just because it is harder (or not possible at all) to list a property for RVA. I agree with Mr Heyes' statement that the reasons why properties are listed on RVA platforms depends on a complex combination of economic and personal factors.
- 4 Moreover, the AirDNA data Mr Heyes has relied on is unreliable. Mr Heyes acknowledges the limitations of the data and that he used it only because there was no other data available. Importantly the data does not distinguish between dates blocked out for personal use and those booked by paying guests and therefore overinflates the rental figures.
- 5 Airbnb respectfully requests that the Council delete the RVA provisions and undertake further work to assess other options that would effectively address housing affordability and availability issues in the Queenstown-Lakes District.

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**Brent Gregory Thomas**  
25 September 2018