

Liquor Law Review Feedback Submission

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Fri 1/04

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To Whom It May Concern,

As a resident of [REDACTED] during the past 4 years, I have witnessed a dramatic decline in the economic and cultural vitality of the neighbourhood in the period since the implementation of 'Lockout Laws' in February 2014.

I chose to move to [REDACTED] not just for the diversity of night-life offered by the locale, but also because I recognised it as a genuinely cohesive community with a real sense of history and a unique identity. Aside from the bars and clubs and their patrons who used to briefly swell the population on Friday and Saturday nights, there exists a community of local residents and small businesses that really do give the precinct the communal character of a village within our beautiful 'city of villages'. I feel that the stark and severe economic effect that has been wrought by the lockout laws has threatened, if not already partially destroyed, this community.

A stroll through the neighbourhood today is akin to wandering a ghost town, window after window forlornly displaying 'For Lease' signs. It is not just the pubs and clubs that are closing, it is all the secondary small business who rely on their presence for their commercial viability; restaurants, cafes, takeaway food vendors, all are closing in droves. We regularly witness the opening and subsequent failure of new restaurant ventures within a matter of months. All of this economic activity is being swept aside and crushed while developers move in to construct luxury apartments in an area that used to be known as Sydney's inclusive and tolerant area of recreation.

It is interesting to note the chronology of some of the developments of 2014. For example, the planning permission granted to the developers of the Omnia complex on Darlinghurst Rd (Greenland Australia > owned by Greenland Holdings > owned by the Shanghai government) predates the announcement of the lock-out laws. The lightning speed with which the laws were legislated conveys a strong impression of, charitably, a lack of necessary investigation and review and, perhaps cynically, suggests an underlying economic agenda being pursued by the state government. The apparently arbitrary geographic definition of the lock-out zone, starkly circumscribing the Star Casino (currently the most violent venue in NSW) also speaks undeniably of a dual standard being applied and a pattern of corrupt selective enforcement.

Kings Cross is an internationally famous locale sitting in the heart of an internationally admired city. It is a unique neighbourhood with a singular history that is part of the wider fabric of Australian cultural identity and national heritage. These laws have turned the area in to a wasteland. It currently stagnates and lies dormant while it awaits its transformation in to a sterile residence for the extremely affluent, a transition that will be an expense and a loss to all of us, to the profit of the very few.

I ask the state government to provide an honest, empirical and objective appraisal of these laws. I ask for their repeal.

Yours Sincerely,

Tim Onslow

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

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