

Submission of draft MDC Freedom Camping Bylaw 2020

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To Whom it may concern

As owner operators of central Picton accommodation since 1993, we thank Marlborough District Council for the chance to submit on the Bylaw draft.

We also thank you for proposing that any Freedom Camping should be in certified self contained vehicles only in limited numbers.

However, we are fundamentally opposed to Freedom Camping in these Covid 19 times and ask that MDC look at a total tourism reset on health, safety and economic grounds. The question we ask is why ratepayers and taxpayers need to pay for some people to enjoy free holidays when there is plenty of camping grounds, DOC sites and various other accommodation choices to suit all budgets?

MDC and Council Officers need to listen to the voices of the local communities and accept that if these communities feel that free camping is unacceptable in their areas, so be it.

Free camping is a convenience and a growing world wide culture of spending as little as possible and taking advantage of local communities while demanding the prime view, parking up spots, then leaving the rubbish and excrement behind ... as highlighted so much in the media.

MBIE's own recent Freedom Camping Survey showed budget free campers spent very little on a daily basis. While International tourism is now non existent, it will come back and those who cannot affordable basic, resonable daily iving costs here should not come. We think that mass budget tourism has had its day.

As indicated on the MDC Survey form, we are opposed to all Free Camping in the Picton and Surrounds areas.

NZMCA members are well catered for with the ability to park at Picton RSA and The Crow Tavern, plus their pop up park in Deerpark Road, Koromiko. There are 5 major campgrounds and camper parks in Picton, plus DOC sites at Whatamango Bay, Aussie Bay and Momorangi Bay, plus plenty of other accommdation at all budget levels..

Picton is a transit town as well as a visitor destination, we have to accept this reality. All accommodation venues cater for late night and early arrivals on ferries and we would ask that the ferries companies investigate a short term park up lane if such a thing could be done safely.

We would accept, if absolutely necessary, 4-6 fully self contained camper vans parked in the temporary MDC carpark on the corner of Dublin and Auckland Streets where they can be easily monitored from library cameras etc and make it more difficult for smaller, non selfcontained vehicles to hide amongst them.

As nearby business owners, we experience free campers entering our property on a regular basis, using our showers, toilets and kitchen facilities without asking. We had huge problems when the Dublin Street Waitohi Rugby grounds were used in the past.

In summary, we ask that MDC listen to the local communities, reset on Free Camping and deem it no longer worthy of catering for with ratepayers and taxpayers money as the recent MBIE survey seems to indicate that it is not worth the expense for the trouble.

We do ask that policing be reinforced along with clear signage, and updating of all camper websites to help change the growing culture that existed pre Covid.

Free camping has no place anywhere near Picton.

Thank you

Rob and Carolyn Burn
Picton