

Elaine Bay Comm. Assoc. Inc.

08 September 2020

Marlborough District Council  
PO Box 443  
BLENHEIM

Dear Sir or Madam

**Re: Marlborough District Council – Proposed Freedom Camping Bylaw 2020**  
**Submission of the Elaine Bay Community Associations Inc**

The Elaine Bay Community Association Inc. (EBCA) recently received notice that a consultation process was initiated to discuss the proposed Freedom Camping Bylaw 2020.

Although the deadline passed on the 7th of September 2020, we would still like to submit some late comments with this letter and attached submission form.

Upon review we noted that in the proposed bylaw update freedom camping remains prohibited (illegal) along the Rai Valley - French Pass Road .

We submitted earlier, with letter dated 30th January 2020, to a survey regarding the current freedom camping situation.

The key themes and recommendations as discussed by EBCA were

1. better information is needed so campers know where freedom camping is allowed and where not
2. better monitoring and policing of areas where freedom camping is not allowed
3. better control of self-containment certifications
4. better planning of new freedom camping areas with regards to set-up, maintenance, and monitoring/policing.

In response to the concerns listed above, we would like to ask for the following measures regarding the bylaw document and its implementation:

1. For Elaine Bay, we would appreciate an aerial picture is added to bylaw chapter **18. French Pass Roads**, depicting the settlement with a clear outline of the whole area regarded covered by the bylaw. This would make it more clear that the whole area of Elaine Bay is a no-freedom-camping zone.

In addition, and as we are sure campers will not study all freedom-camping bylaw documents there are in New Zealand, to implement the prohibition of freedom camping, we suggest that "NO Freedom-Camping"-signs are posted in strategic locations, e.g. at the turn-off from SH6 into Ronga Road, and perhaps at entry roads into settlements, e.g. both ends of Okiwi Bay, entry to Elaine Bay Rd, etc.

2. Councillor Barbara Faulls informed us that MDC has limited workforce for enforcement of the freedom-camping bylaw. We would appreciate if this was looked into to determine if more resources should be allocated once tourism is restarting, at least at peak times.

In addition, we were wondering if EBCA could receive an endorsement letter from MDC that could be presented to wild campers in the settlement to support enforcement of the bylaw locally.

As we have a DOC campground in Elaine Bay, and as DOC is currently planning to reduce camper numbers over peak times (due to restrictions posed by the toilet facilities) by marking of dedicated campsite spaces, it might be that campers that are turned away try to freedom camp instead. An endorsement letter would help the residents in the discussion with these wild campers, however, we are aware that residents could not act as enforcement officers and any disputes arising would need to be directed to MDC.

3. We understand that during regular WOF inspections self-containment stickers of non-compliant vehicles are removed, and also that the NZMCA has raised their standards for self-containment. It would be appreciated if council could look into this further, too, and we appreciate that the definition of self-containment has been further specified in the draft bylaw already.
4. We appreciate that the whole of French Pass Road area will remain a prohibited area, and fully support council in this decision. Costs for set-up, maintenance and enforcement and policing of freedom camping sites would heavily outweigh the benefits, and there are dedicated camping sites and places to stay already available (e.g. Okiwi Bay Holiday Park, NZMCA place in Okiwi Bay, DOC campgrounds in Elaine Bay and French Pass, private accommodation operators).

Thank you for taking our suggestions into consideration.

Sincerely

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Chair: Elaine Bay Community Association