

7 September 2020

The Chief Executive  
The Marlborough District Council

Filed on-line and delivered hard copy by hand to Council offices

**SUBMISSIONS ON DRAFT MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL FREEDOM CAMPING  
BYLAW 2020: FILED ON BEHALF OF THE RESIDENTS OF DOUBLE BAY**

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1. We act for the residents of Double Bay in the above submission and enclose for filing the written submissions of:
  - a. Kathryn Omond;
  - b. Christine Hall
2. Ms. Omond's submission attaches a list of resident signatories who support the submission; *refer, Annex "A"*
3. Both submitters wish to speak to their submissions, and counsel also requests a brief period to make legal submissions.
4. Please note that signed copies of the submissions will be handed-up to the Committee at the hearing.
5. We thank the Council for its assistance.

Yours faithfully,  
**LUNDONS LAW**

*Simon Gaines*

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**A COMMITTEE HEARING**  
**BY THE MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**REGARDING THE PROPOSED FREEDOM CAMPING BYLAW 2020**

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**SUBMISSION BY CHRISTINE HALL ON BEHALF OF THE DOUBLE BAY RESIDENTS**

**ON THE (DRAFT) MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**FREEDOM CAMPING BYLAW 2020**

**DATED: MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2020**

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**SUBMISSION BY CHRISTINE HALL ON BEHALF OF THE DOUBLE BAY  
RESIDENTS**

1. I thank the Committee for providing me with the opportunity to speak at today's hearing regarding the Marlborough District Council Freedom Camping By-Law Submissions 2020.
2. I filed my submission on 7 September 2020, and now wish to speak - from a personal viewpoint - regarding the Health and Safety aspects of freedom camping in the Bay.
3. My submission relates to the *Freedom Camping Act 2012* and the MDC (draft) Freedom Camping By-Law 2020, which refers to Health and Safety ("H&S"). The purpose is to protect the H&S of people who visit the area. I understand this includes not only freedom campers, but also other visitors, picnickers, and people launching their boats in the Bay.
4. Our lawyer will make legal submissions, but for now, I say that the Council's assessment must also include the H&S interests and concerns of the residents, others who live near the Bay, and other (non-freedom campers) users of the Bay.
5. I live directly across from the entrance to the Double Bay Reserve. My husband and I have owned our property for ten years. We live in this beautiful place for its quietness, beauty, and birdlife; we have had many family and friends come to visit so they could share all this with us. But all that changed when the Council decided to allow freedom camping on the Reserve.
6. Council did not consult us before the decision was taken.

7. The only good thing to have happened was the Council installed a toilet, and that was a needed asset for the Reserve, generally. We had hoped this would put an end to the campers defecating on the Reserve, beach, and private land.
8. Unfortunately, it has not.
9. We are generally the 'first port of call' when campers want food, water, use of our wi-fi, and use of our washing machine. We have even been asked by freedom campers to charge their cellphones. Another asked to pitch his tent in our front garden. I am sure the Council is aware of these matters, and I recall these events now examples of the regular and on-going events that the residents experience.
10. My husband, on more than one occasion, has been approached by camper van users who become stuck in a ditch on the Reserve and require assistance. My husband has used his tractor to extract them. He has been called upon in all kinds of weather during the day or night.
11. There is also a problem that the camper vans create themselves when they pull up outside our property and park where they stop, not thinking to pull over to the side in a safe position - oblivious they are creating a traffic hazard for vehicles approaching from both directions. They then exit their vehicles and walk down to the Reserve. It is a matter of time when an accident will occur.
12. I have had a van park over my driveway, which inhibits me from entering my property. On one occasion, I asked them to move. I got the answer: "*what's the hurry, lady*" I do not consider this appropriate behaviour.

13. Our willingness to assist the freedom campers changed the day a campervan going up Moetapu Bay Road got too far to the left and got bogged down. A neighbour offered to help by towing them out with his Ute, but they declined, so he left them to their own devices.
14. They then decided to enter our property and removes shovels, wood, and tools from my husband's shed without our permission. They got themselves out of their predicament – using our property - then just drove away. The first I knew this had happened was when the neighbour - who found the tools left on the side of the road - returned them to us.
15. Then we installed security cameras, at a substantial cost to ourselves, as we cannot see the shed from our house. Had we installed them sooner, we might (also) have identified the person who dumped their rubbish behind our car garage, *i.e., dumped on our property*. After these experiences, requests from campers have been given a No!
16. When freedom campers come to our front door and make requests, it is, at times, delivered in an overbearing and uncomfortable manner. There is often a sense of entitlement – it is like '*I need it, so you give it to me.*' On no occasion have I entered any verbal exchange with them, never have and never will.
17. A knock at the door or window could come at any time of the day or night, and I find this very unsettling when I am home on my own. I have felt very unsafe in my own home, and it has affected my health and wellbeing.
18. I have heart and lung problems, as do several of my neighbours. Part of coping with this is to exercise, this includes a daily walk down to the beach with my dog on a leash with a poo bag attached, but I

have seen - and I quote Section 7.4 "*...campers acting in a manner likely to offend or annoy other people using the site*". This includes campers bathing naked in the creek. I have also observed a gentleman unzipping his trousers to pee in the bushes. I said to him that perhaps he should be using the toilet. These are things I do not expect to see on a walk.

19. We are in the middle of a pandemic; if I go into Blenheim to shop, I must use the app on my phone or a register when entering premises, for contact tracing, I would like to know how the Council is keeping track of campers that have come from who knows where and spend two or three days camping on the Reserve.
20. I have seen water emptied into the creek, which is not "*appropriate disposal of waste*" (the FC Act). I have also seen dirty dishes washed in the creek. Most off-putting is the cleaning of teeth and the spitting on the ground. Because of these types of incidents, I do not consider the area to be a safe, sanitary, or healthy environment.
21. I would also like to add that we own an 8 meter fully self-contained camper van that has a separate toilet and shower. The van has fresh, grey, and black water tanks; we have a certificate to show that we are self-contained, plus the card in the window. We also have certificates for electrical wiring and a certificate for gas. We are also members of the NZMCA and have been for 35 years, but we are going to sell our van this summer as campervanning has lost the appeal it once had due to the dozens of small vans that are not self-contained even though they are displaying a certificate. This creates an atmosphere of discontent that we feel when having to park beside these vans. We now only stay in NZMCA motorhome parks or camping grounds, and we pay for the privilege of doing that.

Regarding rubbish, we take out what we take in.

22. I now limit my walks on the beach and feel that freedom campers have taken away my freedom. I consider that my and the other residents, Health & Safety, are compromised. There is no respect for our property.
23. There is no such thing as *freedom camping* because, in the end, someone has to pay, and it is usually the ratepayer. There is a lot of cost to the environment and the ratepayers of Marlborough, and the Double Bay residents - for little gain.
24. In this submission, I have only covered a small portion of what we all feel as inappropriate behaviour by people who show no respect for our beautiful country.
25. I respectfully ask the Committee to consider banning freedom camping on the Double Bay Reserve.
26. Thank you, and I would be pleased to answer the Committee's questions.

**Dated:** Monday 7 September 2020

**Signed:** Christine Hall

*NB: a signed copy will be handed up  
to the Committee at the hearing*

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Christine Hall