

Summary of the Freedom Camping Bylaw Review

Public Consultation on the Manawātū District Council's draft Freedom Camping Bylaw

You've told us that freedom camping is a great way to vacation in the Manawātū. There have been some recent changes to the law that mean that Council has to update its bylaw. We have taken this opportunity to also make some improvements, such as providing for freedom camping at Mt Lees and Old School Reserve Pohangina. Council wants to know what you think about these proposed changes by making a submission on the draft Freedom Camping Bylaw.

The closing date for feedback is 5pm, Friday 28 March.



Council is required to make the following changes to the bylaw to make it consistent with recent changes to the Freedom Camping Act 2011 (as amended by the Self-contained Motor Vehicles Legislation Act 2023):

- Changes to the definitions of Local Authority Area, and Self-Contained Vehicle.
- Insertion of a definition of “Transitional Period” that provides clarity when in conjunction with the definition of “Self-contained Vehicle” above.
- Changes to the “Offences and Breaches” and “Penalties” sections of the bylaw to refer to the new infringement offences and infringement fees now payable.

The following recommended changes have been informed by the Site Assessment (available online at www.mdc.govt.nz/freedomcamping):

- Provision for both self-contained and non-self-contained freedom camping at Mt Lees and at the Old School Reserve, Pohangina.
- Removal of the Rangiwahia Domain as a fee is now charged to stay at this site.
- Removal of the Himatangi Beach North Road Reserves from the bylaw.
- Removal of the Halcombe Domain from the bylaw due to land ownership considerations.
- Clarification of restrictions that apply at Putai Ngahere Reserve (Vinegar Hill).
- Prohibition of freedom camping at the Tangimoana Estuarine Reserves.

Council also recommends the following improvements as part of its statutory review:

- Deletion of reference to the Local Government Act 2002 as the bylaw is being made under sections 11 and 11A of the Freedom Camping Act 2011.
- Replacement of reference to “Approved Camping Areas” with “Camping Ground” which is defined in the Act.
- Replacement of clauses relating to the keeping of animals at freedom camping sites as this is managed through other Council bylaws.
- Improvements to the clauses that relate to temporary prohibitions or temporary restrictions at freedom camping sites.
- Deletion of clauses that allowed changes to the Schedules without following the bylaw review process outlined in the Act.

A full description of each recommended change and the reasons for these changes is included as **Attachment 2 to the Statement of Proposal**.

The Statement of Proposal and supporting documents are available on Council's Make Your Mark on the Manawātū engagement website. Scan the QR code or visit: www.mdc.govt.nz/freedomcamping



Hard copies of the documents and the form are available from the MDC Customer Service team, currently situated at the Makino Aquatic Centre, 10 Council Place, Feilding or the Manawātū Community Hub Library, Te Āhuru Mōwai.

At the 19 December 2024 Council meeting a resolution was passed that confirmed:

That Council is satisfied, pursuant to section 11(2) of the Freedom Camping Act 2011 that:

- a freedom camping bylaw is necessary for those purposes set out in section 11(2)(a).
- the Bylaw is the most appropriate and proportionate way to address the perceived problems with freedom camping in the Manawātū District.
- the bylaw is not inconsistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990

Feedback received through submissions will help inform the drafting of the bylaw prior to final decisions being made.



To fill in our digital submission form scan the QR code or visit; **www.mdc.govt.nz/freedomcamping** a hard copy of the submission form is available from the temporary Council office located within the Makino Aquatic Centre, or from the Manawātū Community Hub Library in Feilding.

Key Dates

-  **27 Feb:** Consultation open for submissions
-  **28 March:** Consultation closes
-  **17 April:** Hearing for those who wish to speak
-  **1 May:** Deliberations on submissions received
-  **15 May:** Final decisions on the proposed Bylaw

