



Picton Smart & Connected

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Submission by Picton Smart & Connected

To the Marlborough District Council

Freedom Camping Marlborough

Proposed Changes to Bylaw

Long Term Plan Submission

Following our prior submissions of May 2018, 2017, 2016 & 2015.

Our 5th submission is as follows:

We (PS&C) hereby request that a bylaw review be implemented, to allow the current Freedom Camping bylaw to be amended to suit the following recommendations.

1. Key principle:

- 1.1. That it be agreed that only certified self-contained vehicles be permitted to Freedom Camp in Picton and wider Marlborough, in designated sites.
- 1.2. That all non self - contained vehicles without the above described facilities on board, pay to camp in Marlborough at either D.O.C camping sites or at Commercial campgrounds and parks.
- 1.3. **That any vehicle found camping** outside of D.O.C sites or commercial camping facilities in Marlborough without certification as a certified self - contained camping vehicle, be fined \$200.00.
- 1.4. **That it be agreed that Marlborough's townships become recognised NZMCA Campervan friendly towns** by offering designated freedom camping areas to NZMCA certified campervans in close proximity to shops and amenities. A maximum number of vehicles to be agreed per town and existing resource, to be acknowledged.

1.1.NZMCA Motorhome Friendly Towns Criteria

- A legally-compliant Freedom Camping bylaw, recognising certified self-containment,
- A public dump station, Council owned
- Access to potable water at Dump station site
- Refuse and recycling facilities
- Access to medical facilities
- A general shopping area for groceries
- A vehicle service centre

2. Important Considerations

- 2.1. In our opinion (PS&C) Marlborough needs to be brilliant every day, (to align with our regional tourism branding) and human waste and rubbish on our roadsides, beaches and in our forests is not brilliant nor good business for Marlborough. We believe that it is deeply degrading to our tourist economy and that it negatively impacts, on our environment & reputation as a 'clean green' region in *Pure New Zealand*. We believe it is inherently harmful, to our region's tourism values and marketing efforts.
- 2.2. Locals walking dogs presently, regularly experience issues with human faeces in and around Picton and non self-contained free campers are still camping in side streets and urinating on sidewalks and in bushes.
- 2.3. As mentioned in the opening of this submission, and previously, Certified Camping vehicles are designed for camping, they use fire retardant interior materials and infrastructure. Cars, mini vans and other vehicles are not safe for camping, cooking with LPG and sleeping in and in our opinion (PS&C) should not be used for this purpose in local authority designated sites. It should be noted that the Marlborough District Council, in our consideration should not encourage this practice by supplying sites and facilities for non certified vehicles. Anyone camping in a car or other vehicle which is not designed for the purpose of camping, should do so at their own risk without encouragement from any local authority.
- 2.4. Marlborough like most other regions, has plentiful D.O.C camping sites and quality commercial campgrounds for campers to use and in our opinion the MDC does not need to supply camping grounds with facilities free of charge for non self-contained vehicles, at a cost to rate and tax payers.
- 2.5. In our opinion there is a loss of social interaction and connection between our visitors and our Marlborough tourism ambassadors when we encourage large numbers of non self-contained campers to camp in Marlborough. NZMCA have evidence of the dislike by self-contained campers, having to share designated sites with non self-contained travellers.

- 2.1 It should be noted that nationally there was growth of 50,000 freedom campers, between 2016 and 2018. This growth trend cannot be economically satisfied by Council created designated sites.
- 2.2 It is our suggestion that designated camping sites created by the MDC would remain as valuable assets under a self-contained bylaw. Self-containment would also obviate the need for waste management.

3. **In Summary adoption of our submission will provide –**

- 3.1 Protection of Marlborough's environment
- 3.2 Assistance in offering a brilliant environment, every day experience to visitors.
- 3.3 Encouragement for all age groups of visitors, to use appropriate facilities.
- 3.4 Protection of the interests of commercial business and support of Marlborough's tourism economy.
- 3.5 Protection of the health and safety of locals and visitors to Marlborough.
- 3.6 Protection of local authority areas / land.
- 3.7 A high level of social interaction and connection between our visitors and our Marlborough tourism ambassadors.

4. Other New Zealand regions

Many regions in New Zealand have now adopted self - contained only freedom camping policies / bylaws through designed management, using a blend of the Freedom Camping Act 2011 and other acts, such as the Reserves Act.

These districts have created bylaws using the FCA 2011, by exploiting their right to apply restrictions under the act, using other acts that possess overriding qualities when used in conjunction with the act.

All of these regions have applied this regime to protect their environment for tourists and New Zealanders and to protect and support regional business.

We note that **Nelson City District** has adopted fully self-contained freedom-camping-only bylaws. We see this as a valuable opportunity to offer a ‘**Top of the South**’ uniform approach to freedom camping, to make it simpler for campers to understand where they stand, within our region.

We also note in this regard, the consideration of those visitors to New Zealand that do not freedom camp. Their opinion of human waste and rubbish in our environment and the impact it has on this majority group’s perception of New Zealand as a destination.

5. Management/Policing

Improvements to the environment / reduction in waste management requirement will provide funds to assist in the policing of a new self-contained bylaw. This can be enhanced with the use of apps such as *Antenno* and *Snap, Send, Solve*. PS&C would be happy to work closely with the Council in developing management and policing solutions.

6. Funding

Picton Smart & Connected request that annually, sufficient funding is set aside to implement and manage a Freedom Camping bylaw effectively.

Picton Smart & Connected Freedom Camping Work Group

Richard Briggs, Rob Burn, James Wilson