

30 September 2013

Freepost WCC  
Camping Bylaw  
Wellington City Council  
P.O. Box 2199  
Wellington 6140  
policy.submission@wcc.govt.nz

**Re: Proposal to alter the Wellington Consolidated Bylaw 2008 part 5 (Public Places), part 12 (Camping)**

This submission is from the Architectural Centre, an incorporated society dating from 1946, which represents both professionals and non-professionals interested in the promotion of good design.

The Architectural Centre supports the proposal, with two important exceptions as stated below. We consider that the proposal achieves a good balance between allowing freedom camping within or near the city, and managing potential negative effects of camping in the city, while providing clarity to potential freedom campers regarding camping places.

We do however have important concerns regarding two aspects which are absent from the proposal.

1. We are not aware of the relation of this proposal to the Occupy movement protests (which inhabited Civic Square from October 2011-January 2012), or other instances of political occupation (e.g. Moutoa Gardens, Whanganui 1995), but that historic situation raises important issues regarding democracy and how citizens inhabit or occupy public or contested space. A simple reading of the Camping in Wellington proposal would suggest that the bylaw is aimed at tourists and camping from outside of Wellington. The issue we would like to raise is how can Wellington facilitate the rights of its citizens, or others who have a claim to protest within Wellington (as New Zealand's capital city), to occupy space to protest, including protests of a lengthy duration.

We strongly urge that a clause is included within the bylaw which limits its scope to recreational camping and explicitly excludes protest action to ensure that this bylaw is not used as a political tool to suppress legitimate rights to protest through the occupation of public or contested space.

2. Similarly there is no statement regarding homeless use of public space. The Centre considers that, like protest action, the potential for the homeless to be unintentionally and inappropriately subject to the provisions of this bylaw must be prevented by some explicit statement within the bylaw.

Thank you for this opportunity to make a submission on this draft Wellington Camping Bylaw. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Christine McCarthy  
President, The Architectural Centre  
arch@architecture.org.nz



the architectural centre inc.  
PO Box 24178 Wellington