

## Submission on Freedom Camping within the Hurunui District

We are a camping ground on the south side of Waipara River at the end of Darnley Road. Adjacent to our northern boundary is the swimming hole which we developed, manage and maintain. This area is often a haven for people desiring to camp around such beautiful surroundings. We regularly see up to 200 to 300 people picnicking around the pool and enjoying the facility.

Adjacent to our northern boundary on the north side of Waipara River is a campsite which we understand Hurunui Council own or at least condone. This site is well used by freedom campers as they do not wish to pay a fee to use our facilities. I have researched this issue and note that Gisborne District Council have stated that freedom camper do not want to pay and therefore no revenue is going into the Gisborne City Council funds. Freedom campers want to spend their money on experiences and often are just transiting through to get to where they want to go to have that experience.

Having both the above areas on our boundary has created a major headache for us and our immediate community.

Despite 'no camping' signs being obvious, people just ignore the signs and camp anyway. I am aware that Nelson District Council and Christchurch City Council, and I am sure other councils as well, are all grappling with the question as to what to do with freedom camper.

We obviously have a problem in New Zealand and we shouldn't demonise freedom campers. However we personally have had enough of freedom campers and other revellers parking around our pool and camping overnight across the river. There are no toilet at either sites and often people enter our property to use our ablution facilities. On numerous occasions we have had to scrub these ablutions as the user has ribbed facies on the walls, urinated on the floor and thrown toilet paper around the inside and outside of the ablution block. When confronted we are often told where to go as they are usually intoxicated.

I understand that the council is proposing three levels of camping;



1. Certified self-contained vehicles. Often these vehicles are just vans with a Portaloo and something to catch waste water. They are not true self-contained vehicles, although they do display the self-contained sticker. The council needs to check out research of other council around the country for proof of this. However I am aware that purpose built campers often comply with NZS5465:2001.
2. Non-self-contained vehicles. These are the main group that are causing us problems and they should be banned from any place other than a designated camping ground.
3. Tents: All tent user should be banned from freedom camping and informed that they are to use designated camping grounds.

There are ample camp sites in the Hurunui area and the council should be seen to endorse these sites as we all pay fees to operate and spend vast amount of money maintaining our facilities and the least council can do is endorse the use of approved campsite within the district. Most of our clients bring revenue into the Hurunui.

Our argument is that around our pool we and our immediate community regularly pick up bags full of rubbish (see photos attached), facies, broken bottles, and generally leave the site as a tip. We have had to drain the pool on at least four times as campers have thrown broken bottles into the pool. On one occasion a young girl staying at our camp cut her foot open which require stiches.

Our clients who pay to use our facilities, often over the summer complain about the noise levels at night coming from the pool, but more often than not, the greatest noise levels are coming from across the river at the council approved or condoned campsite.

We pay the council a fee to be a registered camping ground and yet there appears to be an area set aside by the council for camping right on our doorstep.

There is lack of toilet facilities, rubbish collection points, and adequate signage prohibiting camping. Where signage is displayed campers appear to snub their noses at them. I have on numerous occasions informed campers that they are camping in a no camping area, only to be given my pedigree and told where to go.

We have had a enough of this abuse, and deliberate acts of disrespect by campers and we are looking at asking the council to support a move to close

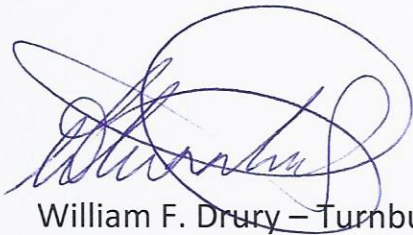
down the site across the river and increase no camping signs at both areas (pool and site across the river) and we are willing to open up our farm block adjacent to Waipara Adventure Centre across Darnley road on the river flats to freedom campers and charge approximately \$4.00 per person per night. We are happy to provide toilets and water and the campers can camp where they like but must remove their rubbish when they leave. This way we will have some say over controlling freedom camper's behaviour. However we will need Council to act and put teeth around closing the areas mention and endorse what we are proposing.

This may be an opportunity to give freedom campers a place to stay at little cost and keep our area clean and tidy where genuine day visitors can enjoy the wonderful idyllic surrounding of Waipara's pool and river catchment.

We must do something to stem the tide of abuse by unwanted campers and their blatant disregard to no camping signage.

We are willing to work with the council on this matter.

Respectfully your

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'William F. Drury - Turnbull', enclosed within a large, loopy circular scribble.

William F. Drury - Turnbull

On behalf of

The Sure & Stedfast Development trading as Waipara Adventure Centre  
(formally Boys Brigade camp).

20 June 2018







