

Date: Friday, 30 July 2021

**ANIMAL MANAGEMENT
BYLAW REVIEW 2021**

**ALBERT-EDEN LOCAL BOARD
WRITTEN FEEDBACK Vol. 1
(1–10)**

Sub #	Organisation Name	Local Board
1		Albert-Eden
2		Albert-Eden
3		Albert-Eden
4		Albert-Eden
5		Albert-Eden
6		Albert-Eden
7		Albert-Eden
8		Albert-Eden
9		Albert-Eden
10		Albert-Eden
11	Auckland Beekeepers Club	Albert-Eden



Animal Management Bylaw Review 2021

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The current rules are set in Te Kaunihera o Tāmaki Makaurau Ture-ā-rohe Tiaki Kararehe 2015 / the Auckland Council Animal Management Bylaw 2015 and associated controls.

Improving the rules about animal ownership and interaction

We recently checked how the rules are working and identified potential improvements.

Our main proposals are to:

- require an approval to keep more than two standard beehives on urban premises with a land area less than 2000 square metres (no approval currently required).
- incorporate rules from another bylaw about feeding animals on private property
- update the definitions, structure, format and wording of the Bylaw and controls to make them easier to read and understand.

Other aspects of the Bylaw, controls and their implementation remain unchanged, for example:

- the Bylaw continues to focus on the impact of animals on people
- matters already covered in existing legislation are not addressed in the Bylaw, for example animal welfare in the Animal Welfare Act, pest control in the Biosecurity Act and Auckland Regional Pest Management Plan and dogs in the Dog Management Bylaw
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Submitter details

Organisation (if applicable):

Your local board: Albert-Eden

Your feedback

Proposal 1: Require an approval to keep more than two beehives on urban premises 2000 square meters or less

We have heard a range of views about limits on beehives in urban areas. We are seeking feedback on:

- allowing more or less beehives without an approval than the proposed two (for example, retaining the current no limit)
- limits for different sized urban premises than the proposed 2000 square metres (for example, requiring an approval for any beehive on urban premises less than 600 square metres, or in an apartment).

To own more than two hives, people would need to apply for an animal management license, which would consider factors like location and proximity to neighbours. These rules will not affect people living in rural areas.

What is your opinion on this proposal? No, I don't agree - there should be fewer rules.

Tell us why: It appears that there has been an arbitrary selection on the number of beehives, without clearly defining what a beehive is. For example, beekeeping is a dynamic activity and often requires the addition of new hives (e.g. splits) to keep an existing hive going. Consequently, to maintain a population from 2 hives may require increasing the number of hives at specific times during the year. the number of bees from a property would be relative to the time of year, not the number of hives as you will be aware. I would suggest up to 4 hives would be a suitable number in residential areas.

Proposal 2: Move rules about the feeding of animals on private property to the Animal Management Bylaw

These rules already exist but we are proposing to include them within the Animal Management Bylaw rather than the Property Maintenance and Nuisance Bylaw 2015, so it is easier to find rules about animals.

What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why:

Proposal 3: Update the Bylaw definitions, structure, format, and wording

We have done this to make the Bylaw and controls easier to read and understand, for example by:

- aligning definitions of 'nuisance' and 'public place' with those in the Public Safety and Nuisance Bylaw 2013
- aligning the Bylaw and control structure, format, and wording with current drafting practices.

What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why:

Are there any other comments you wish to make?

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What is your opinion on this proposal? No, I don't agree - there should be more rules

Tell us why: I am concerned by the large number of bee hives (eg, the 50ish by one person in particular) on small properties

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why: It seems logical

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why: It looks prettier

Are there any other comments you wish to make?

I think cats should be included in the bylaw and be much more closely restricted - but I understand the political considerations that probably make this challenging

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What is your opinion on this proposal? No, I don't agree - there should be fewer rules.

Tell us why: Beekeepers have a community and social responsibility to collect swarms. If your hive swarms you should try and collect the swarm, that would mean having 3 hives on your property temporarily. What is the council's stance on swarm collection. I think no of hives should be increased to 3.

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why:

Are there any other comments you wish to make?

Responsible beekeepers do not cause a nuisance.

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why: It's ok to have some limit, but it should not be onerous for people to keep a couple of hives.

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why: No comment to add.

Are there any other comments you wish to make?

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What is your opinion on this proposal? No, I don't agree - there should be fewer rules.

Tell us why: We have run multiple beehives on our property, they do not disturb the neighbours, but they do help pollinate the surrounding gardens and trees. Beekeepers should hold a license and register their hives, but other than that they should be encouraged

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why: All animal management should be in one bylaw

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why: make it easy for us laypeople to understand

Are there any other comments you wish to make?

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why: No more than 2 hives per household. I work at an inner city Auckland school and every day my car is covered in bee poo. 2 years ago a massive swarm of bees came into our school and flew around outside my classroom for half an hour. We had to put the whole school into lockdown for that time. I had to ring the council who put me in touch with a beekeepers group and someone eventually came and took the queen and the bees. However, for the rest of the week there were still at least a1000 bees flying around the school and classrooms. Do not let bee keepers set up beehives in a 200m radius of schools.

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why: Makes sense, simple really.

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why: no comment

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why: Two is too low. The limit should be 3 hives or higher, not 2.

The reason for this is the minimum number of hives for a functioning hobby is 2 hives. When something goes wrong with 1 hive, the 2nd is available to rescue the 1st. It is still risky running just 2 hives - but the odds of maintaining an apiary are greatly improved.

So every hobby beekeeper should be keeping at least 2 hives.

However, a natural part of managing hives is swarm control and this is typically achieved by splitting existing hives at the right time of the season. These are called "splits". The splits are then available to be given away or sold to new beekeepers. But this cannot be done until the beekeeper is sure the split is "queen right". Which means the beekeeper must keep the hive for, say, approx 6 weeks. That is, the hobby beekeeper must, at least temporarily, have more than 2 hives.

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Other aspects of the Bylaw, controls and their implementation remain unchanged, for example:

- the Bylaw continues to focus on the impact of animals on people
- matters already covered in existing legislation are not addressed in the Bylaw, for example animal welfare in the Animal Welfare Act, pest control in the Biosecurity Act and Auckland Regional Pest Management Plan and dogs in the Dog Management Bylaw
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Submitter details

Organisation (if applicable):

Your local board: Albert-Eden

Your feedback

Proposal 1: Require an approval to keep more than two beehives on urban premises 2000 square meters or less

We have heard a range of views about limits on beehives in urban areas. We are seeking feedback on:

- allowing more or less beehives without an approval than the proposed two (for example, retaining the current no limit)
- limits for different sized urban premises than the proposed 2000 square metres (for example, requiring an approval for any beehive on urban premises less than 600 square metres, or in an apartment).

To own more than two hives, people would need to apply for an animal management license, which would consider factors like location and proximity to neighbours. These rules will not affect people living in rural areas.

What is your opinion on this proposal? No, I don't agree - there should be fewer rules.

Tell us why: Instead of changing a bylaw that was extensively consulted on with beekeepers and clubs in 2013/14 council should better get its enforcement teams ensuring that the troublemaking or negligent people who keep bees/animals are dealt with and not punishing others via a bylaw change.

Beekeepers provide a service by catching and relocating swarms whether they have gone off their own, neighbours' or wild hives. This means that at times we have bees that they didn't ask for and would breach a bylaw doing the right thing. Sometimes swarms can be amalgamated with existing hives but sometimes keeping them until a beekeeper in need/want is found takes time. No commercial beekeeper will come and buy one hive so not sure where the swarms should go to?

Additionally, beekeeping is a natural process and many things can go wrong and hives die more and more often due to stress on bees from illnesses and viruses. Beekeepers generally replenish these losses by splitting existing hives or catching swarms. If you look at the stats, many beekeepers nowadays lose significant amounts of hives over winter. Having only two hives increases the chance that one loses all and cannot create new hives.

Another question is how council wants to ensure they positively deal with beekeepers who own more than a new limit? No commercial beekeeper will come and buy one hive so You may find yourself with heaps of dumped beehives that create a much bigger nuisance for people.

So any restriction in numbers it should be rather a sinking lid not a final date policy.

Furthermore: I would really like to understand how problematic beekeepers are currently dealt with and whether there are a few recurring beekeepers who cause troubles for their neighbours.

Would I need to request this information under the OIA or are you able to provide recent council stats please? Thank you.

Proposal 2: Move rules about the feeding of animals on private property to the Animal Management Bylaw

These rules already exist but we are proposing to include them within the Animal Management Bylaw rather than the Property Maintenance and Nuisance Bylaw 2015, so it is easier to find rules about animals.

What is your opinion on this proposal?

Tell us why:

Proposal 3: Update the Bylaw definitions, structure, format, and wording

We have done this to make the Bylaw and controls easier to read and understand, for example by:

- aligning definitions of 'nuisance' and 'public place' with those in the Public Safety and Nuisance Bylaw 2013
- aligning the Bylaw and control structure, format, and wording with current drafting practices.

What is your opinion on this proposal?

Tell us why:

Are there any other comments you wish to make?

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Animal Management Bylaw Review 2021

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Sometimes the way people interact with animals causes a problem. For example, a poorly maintained chicken coop may create an odour nuisance, or the feeding of wild animals may attract pests.

How Auckland Council helps maintain human-animal bonds

We make rules about animal ownership and interaction to minimise risks to public health and safety, nuisance, offensive behaviour and misuse of council-controlled public places.

The current rules are set in Te Kaunihera o Tāmaki Makaurau Ture-ā-rohe Tiaki Kararehe 2015 / the Auckland Council Animal Management Bylaw 2015 and associated controls.

Improving the rules about animal ownership and interaction

We recently checked how the rules are working and identified potential improvements.

Our main proposals are to:

- require an approval to keep more than two standard beehives on urban premises with a land area less than 2000 square metres (no approval currently required).
- incorporate rules from another bylaw about feeding animals on private property
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To own more than two hives, people would need to apply for an animal management license, which would consider factors like location and proximity to neighbours. These rules will not affect people living in rural areas.

What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

Tell us why: There's lots of beehives popping up by people who don't know how to properly operate them and so they're becoming a nuisance. We need some rules to regulate this.

Proposal 2: Move rules about the feeding of animals on private property to the Animal Management Bylaw

These rules already exist but we are proposing to include them within the Animal Management Bylaw rather than the Property Maintenance and Nuisance Bylaw 2015, so it is easier to find rules about animals.

What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why: In my opinion the old rule should stay, not limiting the number of urban bee hives as long as the neighbours are not negatively affected. The number of 2000 sqm sections will go towards zero with increasing intensification and it is impossible to judge the appropriateness of a property only based on size. There are many more factors to be considered.

I don't think that a license from Council should be required as beekeepers legally have to register their hives and apiaries anyway and are checked that way by competent people.

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why: I'm on the fence for that one, but wonder why the rule would only apply to private property and not to public as well. For example it is not better to feed pigeons on the footpath rather than a private driveway.

Proposal 3: Update the Bylaw definitions, structure, format, and wording

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Yes, I agree

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Submitter details

Organisation (if applicable): Auckland Beekeepers Club

Your local board: Albert-Eden

Your feedback

Proposal 1: Require an approval to keep more than two beehives on urban premises 2000 square meters or less

We have heard a range of views about limits on beehives in urban areas. We are seeking feedback on:

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- limits for different sized urban premises than the proposed 2000 square metres (for example, requiring an approval for any beehive on urban premises less than 600 square metres, or in an apartment).

To own more than two hives, people would need to apply for an animal management license, which would consider factors like location and proximity to neighbours. These rules will not affect people living in rural areas.

What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why: The Auckland Beekeepers Club is centrally located, has been operating for more than 70 years, and has more than 500 members, making it (by far) the largest and longest-operating club in Auckland. The club wishes to make the following submission.

1. Your proposal to require approval to keep more than 2 hives on an urban section of 2000m² or less will have the opposite of the intended effect of better bee management. A good beekeeper should have a minimum of two hives, so that they can best manage the colonies to ensure their continued good health. This means that they can merge the hives if one is not strong or split the hive if it is needed. Also, one of the ways to manage swarming is to remove the old queen to a nuc box (small hive) with about half the bees. That way, she will think she has swarmed and then will not leave and cause a nuisance in the community. This means that there needs to be the ability for the number of hives to go up and down as good apiary management dictates. It should be careful beekeeping that is the objective, not a specified number of hives that will likely have perverse outcomes - i.e., let the old queen swarm rather than need to get an approval for another hive.
2. Currently the club provides a community service by collecting and housing swarms which occur naturally in Spring & early-Summer. If such a collection would put a beekeeper over their limit then it is likely that it will not be collected, and the swarm will instead find a new home behind the weatherboards or bricks of a house, causing much greater nuisance.
3. Currently in the bylaws it is a legal requirement to register beehives under the biosecurity acts. This is now done through HiveHub with the AFB PMP. There is a levy for each apiary which supports the work to eradicate AFB from the country. A second levy to the Council (\$260 annually to keep more than 2 hives) is likely to lead to evasion and non-payment, and thereby defeat the objectives of both of the Council & AFB PMP, to the detriment of beekeeping for both disease control and public nuisance.
4. The review of the bylaw found that more people thought that controls should be relaxed than increased (7% to 4% respectively) and that a clear majority (65%) thought the current controls to be appropriate. We believe that the current controls give the Council sufficient powers to manage an apiary causing nuisance to neighbours, and the club has assisted in previous problems where the beekeeper is a member. The club emphasizes responsible beekeeping to our members, both established and new, and will continue to do so. A single hive poorly managed can create far greater nuisance to neighbours than 3 or 4 hives managed responsibly.
5. We strongly advocate that you keep the current no limit system. Beekeeping is already highly regulated, you risk losing urban bees which would be an environmental disaster. It could lead to a massive explosion in the wasp population which urban beekeepers currently work to control. Wasps are inarguably a much bigger nuisance than bees, without the pollination value that bees offer. Responsible beehive management is key to minimizing the occurrence of bee swarms and nuisance from excrement. A first step should be to establish that the problem is honeybees and not wasps, as the public can often confuse the two.
6. We believe that beekeepers causing a nuisance to neighbours can be managed within the existing regulations by correctly utilizing the resources already in place, namely Council inspectors, clubs, and the AFB Management agency.

We would like to be informed when you will be analyzing all feedback received and providing a summary to the public for view, and when all feedback will be considered by a Bylaw Panel at a public meeting in October 2021.

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