

Date: Friday, 30 July 2021

**ANIMAL MANAGEMENT
BYLAW REVIEW 2021**

**DEVONPORT-TAKAPUNA
LOCAL BOARD
WRITTEN FEEDBACK Vol. 1
(12–17)**

Sub #	Organisation Name	Local Board
12		Devonport-Takapuna
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Animal Management Bylaw Review 2021

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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
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Submitter details

Organisation (if applicable):

Your local board: Devonport-Takapuna

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? Yes, I agree

Tell us why: To limit the amount of hives in a certain area overall

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: For ease of clarity

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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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: Max 4 hives on 2000sqm or less

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

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What is your opinion on this proposal?

Tell us why:

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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: Some people are allergic to bee stings and whilst we need the bees, desperately we must manage the quantity in any urban locations carefully

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

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why: No idea what these rules relate to.

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why:

Are there any other comments you wish to make?

Dogs should be on leashes at all times on beaches. They knock over young children, elderly people and defecate without their owners seeing them as the owners are walking miles away from their dogs.

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why: not sure. I believe we need more bees, but people can be allergic. Can neighbours just talk to each other instead of MORE RULES

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why: Somedays really

Are there any other comments you wish to make?

Stop creating jobs for yourself.. That i have to keep paying for in rates that's are already so high.

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

Tell us why: Without data about the extent of the problems caused by irresponsible beekeepers it is hard to have an informed opinion. I may be mistaken but it seems Council have not been open about the problem that the proposed bylaw is supposed to fix. I have been keeping bees in Devonport (currently 5 hives, in an area under 2000m² area) for 10 years. The hives are visible to the public and for that reason I get a lot of feedback, which except for two cases had been very positive (thanks for doing this, its great you are caring for the bees etc). What worries me about the proposed bylaw are the two exceptions to this positive feedback. Bylaws can be used for harassment (we had anonymous complaints about bees, chickens, cooking smells, building regulations, commercial food preparation etc) - all in a period of a few weeks. This led to many council inspections which eventually stopped after the neighbour built a high wall to deflect the cooking smells (the actual problem we think). The other negative feedback started with a series of posts on local social media about 'yellow rain' - i.e. yellow marks on cars parked in the street blamed on bees. This situation sounds comical but was threatening, given the comments made (bee keeping is OK, but only in a rural setting etc). It was difficult to know how to respond when the letter writer didn't know the difference between bees and wasps and was unaware that bees are attracted to flowers near where the cars are parked.

In general I think this bylaw may cause more trouble than the trouble it is designed to fix. I would suggest that if there is indeed no other way of dealing with the rare irresponsible beekeeper then change the proposed bylaw to allow and encourage normal beekeeping - i.e. a limit of 6 hives on an average sized sections.

Beekeepers occasionally have more hives than might seem necessary because they are insuring against winter colony losses or raising queens (2 hives are not enough - One year i lost both my hives to varroa and had to restart the apiary from scratch). On the other hand beekeepers can also create real problems for neighbours with just a single hive if they haven't placed it correctly or used a screen to elevate the bees flight path near the hive. I would much prefer that Council thinks of a better method to resolve bee related disputes rather than introducing a bylaw that will attract needless complaints.

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why: Since in general beekeepers don't feed bees (its not necessary in Auckland) how do the 'rules about the feeding of animals on private property' relate to beekeeping?

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What is your opinion on this proposal? Other

Tell us why: This is a technical council matter -

Are there any other comments you wish to make?

Please consult with MBIE and the Auckland Bee Club and be transparent about the reasons for the proposed bylaw. Apiary locations are already registered with MBIE (does Council have this data?) and beekeepers are already regulated. Apiaries have to be inspected for disease and errant beekeepers can have their hives ordered to be destroyed. I think it would be great if Council could sit down with MBIE and ABC and work out an effective solution for the occasional problems that may occur with irresponsible beekeepers rather than introducing a 'one size fits all' bylaw which may have unwanted side effects.

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