

**Organisation:** Whitewater New Zealand

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**Do you wish to speak at a hearing?** Yes

**I understand that all submissions will be treated as public information, except my contact information:**

Yes

**Regarding the draft Freedom Camping Bylaw 2021:** We oppose the draft bylaw as currently proposed

To whom it may concern.

1. Whitewater New Zealand respectfully submits in opposition to the Draft Freedom Camping Bylaw 2021.
2. Whitewater New Zealand is a national organisation representing a community of 1000+ kayakers, packrafters and river users. Generally our mission is to foster the river community, promote safe, enjoyable river use, ensure public access to rivers, and preserve Aotearoa's lakes and rivers.
3. Queenstown Lakes District is something of a paddling Mecca in New Zealand, boasting some of the country's biggest and best rapids. Of concern in this submission is access and camping at the Kawarau and Hawea rivers. More specifically, the proposed prohibition of camping at Rafters Road, and the allowance of restricted camping at Camphill Road Carpark. These are addressed in turn.
4. We accept the need for properly managed freedom camping in order to allow access to public spaces whilst preventing degradation of public spaces, and reducing pressure on infrastructure such as car parking and toilets. However, we don't believe the Draft Freedom Camping Bylaw 2021 achieves this.

### **Submission 1: WWNZ OPPOSES the Prohibition of Camping at Rafters Road**

5. The proposed bylaw purports to prohibit any camping at Rafters Road, and instead allow people to camp further up the road on Coal Pit Road (Gibbston Reserve Carpark).
6. The bylaw is unclear on its implications to the DOC campsite at the end of Rafter's Road. *If this bylaw effectively bans* the tent-camping in the current camping area at Rum Curries Hut, Whitewater NZ respectfully opposes it. If this bylaw does not affect the existing campsite then please ignore submission points 7-10.
7. Moving the camping area like this removes campers from being alongside a river with a freshwater source, toilet facility, and being tucked out of the way, to being between multiple residential dwellings without any such amenities

8. Whilst we accept the new campsite is restricted to self contained vehicles, evidence in the past and throughout the region shows that self contained bathroom amenities are avoided wherever possible. Therefore the toilet at rafters road will either continue to be used in the same degree, resulting in effectively no difference. Or self dug toilets will be found in the new campsite, between residential dwellings.
9. It is the opinion of Whitewater New Zealand that the existing restrictions: a two night maximum stay restricting camping to tents, and constricting car parking space, are sufficient in managing the impact that freedom camping has on the area.
10. It would be a significant loss to the paddling community to lose access to the Rafters Road campsite, it is a treasured campground, meeting place of friends and area which we consider ourselves Kaitiaki.

### **Submission 2: WWNZ OPPOSES the Allowance of Restricted Camping on Camphill Road Carpark.**

11. Notwithstanding our first submission Whitewater NZ opposes the establishment of Camphill Road Carpark as a freedom camping area. The reasons being the practicality of establishing a freedom campsite for self contained campers.
12. A well understood consequence of self contained campers is that when there are available public toilet facilities, they will be used in preference over the small toilets built into the campervans themselves.
13. Across the bridge from the new camping area is a publicly available longdrop designed for the convenience of river and nearby track users, **however the only access to this is across private land**. The relationship between the landowner and Hawea Whitewater Park users has been of mutual respect and care for that land based on a prohibition of camping there.
14. It is the opinion of Whitewater NZ that the increased traffic, and camping in the area will place strain on the amenities currently available. Furthermore it will place strain on the private landholder's allowance of their property as a thoroughfare. It would be a disaster to lose access to this area, car park and longdrop, but is a very real consequence of establishing a freedom camping site nearby.
15. Lastly the increased traffic to the area resulting from the added publicity of the freedom campsite present safety concerns. There is already pedestrian traffic crossing the road by the bridge, (which is in a dip after a blind corner). Additionally no allowance for pedestrian crossing of the bridge has been made. The lack of toilet facilities at the proposed campsite, will result in high numbers of pedestrians crossing the bridge itself to access the toilet on the other side, presenting further risk.

For the purposes described in submissions one and two, Whitewater NZ respectfully opposes this draft bylaw.

Ngā mihi

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