



This aerial image supplied by Auckland Transport shows the key area where cars are parked despite yellow lines.

there aren't facilities at that end.
 "There were bollards. I think the board has a mixed view about whether the bollards should go back because in an area where there is access to the beach there is at least some parking there, but it's not much use if it's taken up the whole time."
 Auckland Transport says it is planning to do something to address residents' concerns.
 "We are looking at options around parking in this area taking into consideration the limited parking, the issue of freedom camping and the impact on the dunes," spokesperson Mark Hannan says. "We hope

to have something sorted by next summer."
 Ms Handley prefers a quicker resolution. "We favour working faster than that of course. It's a problem now and it will remain a problem now that it's become a known spot for people to stay over. That's not suitable because there are no toilets and there are no facilities for people."
 Mr Hannan confirms that until further changes are made, parking laws will be enforced.
 "The Strand does get looked at on a regular basis and infringements have been issued to vehicles on broken yellow lines."
 • Rob Brennan

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Freedom camping ban proves elusive

The Waiheke Local Board's goal to ban freedom camping anywhere on the island's public land is taking longer to achieve than first thought.
 "We've been really adamant all along that Waiheke isn't suitable for freedom camping because we don't have the infrastructure, we don't have a lot of public toilets, we don't have pump-out facilities for chemical toilets and we don't have roads that are suitable for campervans," says local board chair Cath Handley.
 "Neither do [freedom campers] add much to the economy because they come fully equipped. If they're only here for two or three days they don't necessarily spend anything at all on the island."
 Under the Freedom Camping Act 2011, the activity is permitted in any local authority area unless there is a by-law restricting or prohibiting it in specified places.
 However, the act states the by-law cannot be so wide that it bans freedom camping in all areas of a local authority's district. Also, even when applied to smaller designated areas, a ban must be the most appropriate and proportionate way of addressing the need to protect either an area, the health and safety of people

who may visit the area (not residents alongside the area), or access to the area.
 Working within those legislative constraints, it seems Auckland Council is so far not confident an island-wide ban can be justified.
 "At the moment it's not clear that the council's governing body will vote for that," says Ms Handley. "It's still in the pipeline."
 "I've read the feedback from Waiheke people who took part in the public consultation and they don't favour freedom camping on Waiheke either. They'd like just a general blanket prohibition."
 Auckland Council invited public submissions on a proposed by-law under an on-line consultation that ran from early December last year until mid-February.
 The council also ran two-hour drop-in sessions for public engagement during February. They were in seven locations within the Auckland region, but Waiheke was not one of them.
 Ms Handley remains determined to achieve exclusionary status for Waiheke.
 "It's not over yet. There is significant advocacy from the local boards happening and we'll see what the governing body does with that." •

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