

Wellington City Council Guidelines for Community Beekeeping on Public Land

Permission is required to keep bees on Wellington City Council administered land. Permission is at the sole discretion of the Council, and is granted subject to the following conditions. Additional conditions may also be required by way of a licence or permit and each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Applications will be assessed against the primary purpose of the reserve land, bylaws, reserve management plans and other relevant policies. The Council may review conditions in licences or permits and before making any changes the Council will provide the beekeeper notice of such changes.

Standard conditions:

1. Hive location to be agreed with Council and must not be changed without Council approval.
2. An aerial map from Google Maps or similar showing proposed site must be provided to the Council for this purpose.
3. Council will consider the location of the hive site in relation to neighbours and other users of the public land.
4. Other public users of the adjacent area are consulted (gardeners, sports clubs, horse or stock graziers). Council will provide users' contact details for this purpose.
5. Beekeeper must hold a DECA (Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement) or be mentored by a beekeeper who holds this qualification.
6. Beekeeper's name and hive site must be registered with AsureQuality and the hives must prominently show the Beekeeper's Apiary Registration Number.
7. Beekeeper's name and phone number – preferably a mobile number (or that of the mentor) should be prominently displayed on a sign adjacent to the apiary site.
8. A maximum of 4 hives are placed at any one site. Only one apiary site is permitted on each Council reserve property. No additional apiaries will be permitted within 500m on same reserve land.
9. Hives are not located within 20m of any adjoining property boundary and within 35m of a key recreational facility (e.g. Bowling Green, sports field, playground or major walkway). This is subject to site conditions and maybe adapted through consultation where necessary.
10. Beekeeper must be aware that hives are on public land and that public health and safety is first priority.

11. The bees must not be kept in such conditions or hives sited in such a way that as to create or be likely to create a nuisance to any person e.g. bee flight-paths and aggression.
12. Hive management and manipulations must be timed as far as possible to minimise disturbance to gardeners and other land users and the beekeeper is encouraged to liaise with gardeners or other users of the public land in order to facilitate this.
13. Beekeeper must ensure that gentle strains of bees are kept, and if the bees become aggressive or exhibit “following” tendency, the colony should be re-queened or removed until its undesirable traits have been resolved.
14. Storage of beekeeping equipment or unattended hives on-site is not permitted.
15. Beekeeper is responsible for clearance of grass and weeds within 1 metre around each hive. Council management practices such as weed and animal control will not be inhibited.
16. Hives are not to be located within or immediately against (not within 5m) a significant native forest area (bush remnants).
17. Beekeeping practices pose no increased risk of fire (beekeepers’ smokers are exempted).
18. Beekeepers agree to indemnify the Council from:
 - a. All damages or loss resulting from any act or omission on the part of the applicant, their employees, sub-contractors or invitees. The applicant and their invites shall recompense the Council for all expenses incurred by the Council in making good any damage to the reserve/park or other property resulting from any such act or omission.
 - b. All actions, suits, proceedings, claims, costs (including legal and debt collection fees) and demands whatsoever which may be made or brought against Council by reason of the beekeeping operations by the beekeeper and their invitees, or by reason of any act or omission or negligence of the beekeeper and invitees.
19. Council will investigate any complaints and in particular those related to health and/or nuisance and in consequence may withdraw the licence or permit via issue of 14 days’ notice for the removal of hives.
20. These guidelines are primarily for Community use. Commercial Licences (over 4 hives) maybe granted in accordance with the guidelines on a case by case basis.