

(WCC, 2022)

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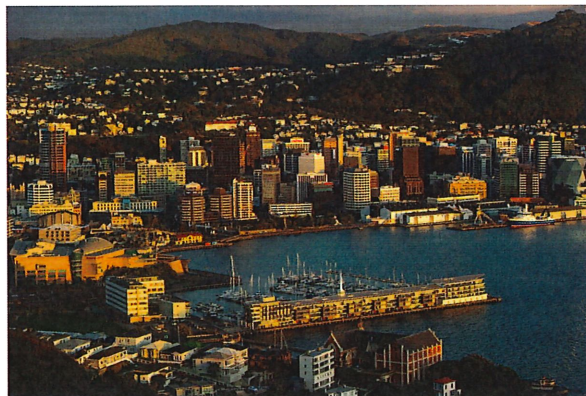
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Update on Council response to Parliament occupation

Wellington City Council is working hard with Police and partner agencies to deal with the protest occupation at Parliament.



These are very challenging times and we are dealing with a unique situation.

We fully understand the frustrations and concerns of Wellingtonians over this situation.

Unfortunately the number of vehicles illegally blocking roads, alongside the volatile nature of the protest, means all agencies, including the Council, are having to look at options that address resourcing and the need to keep our staff safe – there are significant safety issues in play.

As well as working closely with Police, we have established a dedicated Council team to address the wide-ranging operational issues that emerge.

We are following every possible route and option we can, but for security reasons, we are unable to provide detailed information about these possible approaches.

Where we can, we will keep Wellingtonians informed of developments, but we ask for your patience and tolerance while we work to resolve this difficult situation.

Frequently asked questions:

1. Why isn't WCC towing vehicles?

The Council is working with Police and will take direction from them. The overall safety of our people is a number one priority.

2. Why do I have to pay for parking and protestors don't?

People are required to pay for parking during the hours of 8am to 8pm city wide. We are aware that the protestors have not paid for parking in the vicinity of the protest and we have already taken enforcement action with the support of the Police. We are continuing to monitor the situation and will take direction from Police while ensuring the overall safety of our people.

3. Why aren't illegally parked cars being ticketed?

Our parking officers have already ticketed a large number of vehicles parked illegally around Parliament in conjunction with Police. We are working with the Police to do this in a way that is safe for our staff.

4. How is Council responding to the health and safety issues at Parliament - access to water, sanitation, food selling/food truck licences?

For any food trucks on site we will check they are licensed to sell food. There are porta-loos on site (not supplied by council) and the protestors have access to water.

5. Why isn't Parliament subject to water restrictions?

Parliament is on corporate water supply and is not subject to the same restrictions as residents.

6. Will you strip licenses from food trucks serving protestors/parked illegally?

Licences can only be removed through a statutory process, and initial assessments are that there is no breach of the Food Act.

7. What do I do if I feel unsafe?

Any harassment or abuse should be reported to the Police.

8. Why did you provide the protestors with porta-loos?

These were not provided by the Council.

9. What will you do with the rubbish and waste left by the protestors? Who will pay to remove it?

The disposal of rubbish and waste is the responsibility of the landowner.

Rubbish left on Parliament grounds. As this is Crown land, it is the responsibility of the Department of Internal Affairs to organise the clear up and disposal of this rubbish.

Rubbish left on Victoria University of Wellington grounds. As this is University land it is the responsibility of Victoria University of Wellington to organise the clear up and disposal of this rubbish.

Rubbish left in litter bins and on the street. As this is Council land, Council is responsible for the clear up and disposal of rubbish and street cleaning.

10. What will you do to support businesses that have had to close?

We recognise that this is a very difficult time for businesses in the Parliament precinct. We are urgently looking for a response that helps support Wellington businesses in the area to recover.

11. What will you do if emergency vehicles cannot pass through?

Emergency vehicles have been informed of which locations have limited access - any emergency vehicles that need access will be provided with alternate routes and we will support them with traffic management and traffic signals as appropriate.

12. Who will pay to repair damage to lawns and other public property?

Damage to lawns and public property will be handled between the Council road maintenance and PSR teams.

13. How are the pop-up kitchens allowed to operate without a license - isn't that unsafe?

The pop-up kitchens do not appear to be selling food - so the council is not directly involved in regulating the activity.

14. What is being done to protect the welfare of children at the protest?

The Police are monitoring the situation closely and will follow up as needed.

15. Is it legal to freedom camp anywhere now?

Parliament land is not covered under WCC's Freedom Camping Bylaws in schedule 1.

16. What will happen if I refuse to pay my parking ticket?

Once ticketed people have 28 days to make payment and then a reminder notice will be sent to the registered owner of the vehicle. If payment is not received after that it will be referred for collection. If people wish to appeal their ticket they have 28 days to do so.

17. What do I do if I need to access library services at the He Matapihi Molesworth branch?

Our He Matapihi Molesworth Library remains closed until further notice because of access issues to the National Library building. The National Library is also closed. If you have reserves waiting, please be assured that these will be kept for you until we're able to reopen. Items that are due can be returned to any Wellington City Libraries branch. We apologise for any inconvenience.