



Newtown Residents' Association

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Submission on: Animal Bylaw

Introduction

The Newtown Residents' Association appreciates the opportunity to have a say on the draft Animals Bylaw.

Our Newtown Residents' Association represents the suburbs of Newtown, Berhampore, Mt Cook and parts of Melrose (total population 21,324 in the 2013 census). We are an active local group of residents and business people, concerned with maintaining and improving our suburb's liveability and connectedness. Since 1885, Newtown locals have acted collectively to make our community a thriving, diverse, great place to live. Our organisation became an Incorporated Society in July 1963. We care passionately about the design and function of our urban, social, cultural and natural environments. The Association is one of the threads that ties these southern suburbs together as a community.

Views of the Association were gathered at the monthly meeting on 18 April 2016 and by email, and this submission reflects the collective discussions. The submission draft was also circulated to the Association executive committee for comment and confirmation.

The Newtown Residents' Association would like to be heard in support of this submission.

Submission on proposed Animals Bylaw

- 1. Keeping more than three cats over six months old should have to seek Council permission.**

The Newtown Residents' Association April meeting was neutral on this proposal.

We have some comments. Clause 4.2.3 (c and d) needs further clarification. This is the clause that outlines what the Council will consider when assessing an application to allow more than three cats. (Clause 4.2 3). We would like to see the following parts of this clause clarified:

4.2.3 c. Clarify what is the expected provision for the cat's hygienic, control and confinement.

4.2.3 d. Clarify what is the expected provision for the protection of other persons or property from being affected in any way by the cats. How would the Council come to a decision that persons and properties have been affected in any way? e.g. a neighbour could say they are affected because they simply dislike cats.

2. All domestic cats must be microchipped and registered with a recognised microchip registry.

The Association does not agree with this proposed change.

The Association area has pockets of high socio economic deprivation and we are concerned that the cost of microchipping may be more than some of our residents can afford. In addition, microchips are not infallible and from time to time may be unreadable.

We would support this Council proposal if micro-chipping was free or low cost for cat owners.

We think that neutering cats is important and would support a programme whereby cats are neutered free or for low cost.

3. We agree that roosters are prohibited from urban areas

4. The Association is neutral on needing Council permission for keeping more than 12 poultry.

Members who have neighbours with chickens commented that they enjoy the presence of urban poultry and seeing others live more sustainably.

5. The Association is neutral on preventing people feeding animals in public places.

From time to time this is a problem in particular locations in the Association's area but is not an on-going issue. In discussing this issue we felt that it is more of a problem in the CBD rather than a city-wide issue. Some people felt that prohibiting feeding animals in public places is too draconian. Our Association area and our communities are diverse and there is resistance from parts of our community to 'clean up' our suburb, describing such efforts as

'gentrification'. Others thought that feeding animals such as pigeons, seagulls or ducks is a small pleasure for some people.

A suggestion is that the intention of the initiative to prohibit feeding could be covered by adopting a 3 step process that involved to first notify locally, then to consult on and then if appropriate, to prohibit feeding in a particular area should feeding be causing or sustaining a local problem, or encouraging aggressive scavenging, or attracting rats.