
SECTION 7 - SIGNS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of signs and other forms of outdoor advertising is to provide information to the general public. The nature of information which is conveyed includes: availability of goods and services, notice of forthcoming events, directions to traffic and pedestrians, and identification of particular sites or premises. Signs are essential throughout the district for the information they provide, adding vibrancy and colour to an area and contributing indirectly to its economic viability. However, there is the possibility that signs and other forms of outdoor advertising may have adverse environmental effects, particularly on visual amenities, and may conflict with traffic and pedestrian safety in the District.

The standards of visual amenities vary between different parts of the District, and are generally defined by the range and nature of land uses in an area. Those areas which are perceived as having a consistent and uncluttered visual amenity, such as the residential or rural areas of Waimate, are more susceptible to the potential adverse effects of signage. In contrast in areas where the visual amenity is more diverse, such as commercial or industrial areas, the potential adverse effects of signs are limited by the existing mix of visual amenity. In addition, different areas of the District have variable needs for signs. In commercial and industrial areas signs are necessary and accepted features, as they attract customers to the business, and allow the easy identification of a site. Because of the range in needs and the visual sensitivity of different parts of the District, consideration needs to be given to different standards for signage in different areas.

ISSUES

The following are the resource management issues relevant to signs and advertising in the Waimate District. The objectives and policies which address these issues are then referred to. Finally, when the Council intends to implement the objectives and policies associated with the issue by means outside the District Plan, these means are listed.

Issue 1 - Signs and Traffic Safety

Description

The potential adverse effects of signs or outdoor advertising on traffic safety include:

- distraction of drivers' attention due to inappropriateness of the location, design, size, or type of sign.
- poor location or design of sign causing impulsive driver action, such as stopping or sudden turning movements without giving adequate warning signals.
- These effects have their greatest impact on roads such as arterial routes and State Highways where the potential for traffic accidents is greater because of the larger volumes of traffic regularly using these roads. All signage situated within a State Highway is subject to bylaw controls of Transit New Zealand. In addition as State Highways and roads are designated for their transportation purpose, signs and other activities which have purposes related to the road are permitted as of right as an integral part of the road.

Because of the concerns of the roading authorities to maintain a high level of traffic safety and efficiency, roading signs are generally well designed and cause little or no problems in terms of driver distraction. However other signs on or near roads do have the potential to endanger road users as mentioned above.

Relevant Objectives and Policies

- Signs: Objective 1 and Policies 1A and 1C

Issue 2 - Maintaining the Amenity of Areas Within the District

Description

The need for controls on signs in the District is important to ensure that the potential visual effects of signs do not adversely affect the amenities of the District. Because of their different characteristics, residential and rural areas are more susceptible than business areas (commercial and industrial) to the potential impacts of signs. In particular, signage associated with businesses of prostitution in the rural zones have the potential to create adverse visual effects which may cause serious offence to some members of the community and adversely effect the amenity of the area in which the signs are located. Therefore different forms of control are required to maintain and enhance the visual amenities of different areas.

Relevant Objectives and Policies

- Signs: Objective 1 and Policies 1B and 1D

SIGNS - OBJECTIVE AND POLICIES

Objective 1 – Signs

Signs which convey necessary information, while avoiding or mitigating any adverse effects on the visual amenities of the District, public safety, convenience or access.

Reasons

- Because signs provide information and can add colour and vibrancy to places it is desirable to avoid and mitigate adverse visual effects of signs by providing only for those signs which are compatible with public safety, convenience, access and the maintenance of amenity in certain areas.

Policy 1A - Traffic Safety

To prevent the display of signs which may adversely affect traffic safety, by causing confusion or distraction to or obstructing the views of motorists or pedestrians.

Explanation and Reasons

- As for Objective 1
- It is appropriate that the location, size and design of signs be controlled to minimise the potential for driver distraction and dangerous driving.
- Signs with minimum lettering ensure the effectiveness of signs.

Policy 1B - Amenity Controls

To prescribe standards controlling the number, size, location and nature of signs in different areas of the District, in accordance with the character and amenity of the areas and the community's desire to maintain and/or enhance the environment, appearance or visual amenity of those areas.

Explanation and Reasons

- As for Objective 1
- It is desirable that the character and amenity of rural and residential areas in particular be maintained and remain essentially non-commercial. As signs are indicative of commercial activity it is therefore appropriate to limit the number, type and location of signs in residential and rural

areas, and to limit some signs in business areas which are not characteristic of these areas e.g., sky signs.

Policy 1C - Sign Construction

To ensure all signs are constructed and placed in a manner which does not pose danger to property or people.

Explanation and Reasons

- As for Objective 1
- Any danger to people or property posed by signs should be avoided.

Policy 1D - Public Places Etc

To ensure that the effects of advertising in or over public places or attached to utilities, community facilities or public reserves do not adversely affect the non-commercial character of these places.

Explanation and Reasons

- As for Objective 1
- Controls on the number and size of signs on public and amenity facilities and land is necessary to maintain the non-commercial character of these.

Anticipated Environmental Results

Objective 1 and its associated policies are anticipated to result in the following outcomes:

- Adequate signage to convey the information necessary for the social, economic and cultural welfare of the community.
- Minimal adverse effects of outdoor advertising on traffic and pedestrian safety including the avoidance of the potential for drivers to be distracted by signs.
- Maintenance and enhancement of the visual amenities of the residential and rural areas of the District.
- Colourful and vibrant signage within the business areas of the District.
- Signage which effectively conveys its message to the public.

Methods of Implementation

Objective 1 and its associated policies will be implemented through the following methods:

District Plan Rules

- Compliance with height and setback controls - 1a
- Signs obstructing views, resembling signals, confusing materials - 1b
- Requirements on construction, fixing, placing and maintenance of signs - 1c
- Limits on number, size and type of signs on public and commercial facilities - 3
- Signs on or over roads - 3
- Limit on roofs and above verandas - 4a
- Verandah signs - 4b & c
- Sandwich boards - 4f
- Limits on sign size, number and height - Rural and Residential - 5a & 6b
- Minimum letter size (Rural and Residential) - 5a iv & 6b iii
- Minimum distance from pedestrian crossing or intersection (Rural and Residential) - 5a v & 6b iv
- Minimum distance from curve (Rural and Residential) - 5a vi & 6b v
- Minimum distance between signs (Rural) - 6b i
- Minimum visibility (Rural) - 6b ii
- Signs on parked vehicles - 7b i
- Discretionary activity signs - 7

Other Legislation

- Exercising control over signs and advertising within the road reserve as road controlling authority.

RULES - SIGNS

1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL SIGNS

- a All signs shall comply with the height requirements for the zone in which they are located.
- b No sign shall be erected or allowed to remain on or near a road which will:
 - i obstruct the line of sight of any corner, bend, intersection or vehicle crossing.
 - ii obstruct, obscure or impair the view of any traffic sign or signal.
 - iii resemble or be likely to be confused with any traffic sign or signal.
 - iv use reflective materials that may interfere with a road user's vision.
 - v use flashing or revolving lights.
 - vi give rise to excessive levels of glare to a hazardous degree.
- c All signs shall be constructed, fixed and placed in a manner so they do not pose a danger to property or people. This shall be the responsibility of the sign owner and the owner of the building or land on which the sign is placed.
- d Advertising blimps or captive balloons shall not be flown:
 - i more than 40m above the ground.
 - ii within a 5 kilometre radius of any aerodrome.
 - iii outside daylight hours.
 - iv when wind speeds exceed 15 knots.
 - v above or within 50m of an arterial road (measured horizontally from the road boundary. Refer Section 9, Clause 3 for list of Arterial Roads).
 - vi above any road, heritage building or site, or Residential Zone.
- e Advertising blimps or balloons shall be flown with at least two guy-ropes attached so that in the event of one rope breaking the remaining rope shall adequately restrain the blimp or balloon.
- f All signs shall be maintained in good order and shall not become unsightly or dangerous.
- g Any sign which has become redundant shall be removed.

2 SIGNS PERMITTED IN ALL ZONES

The following signs shall be Permitted Activities in all zones subject to compliance with the General Requirements for All Signs in Rule 1.

- a Traffic signs including all Transit New Zealand signs on state highways, signs approved under the Transit New Zealand Bylaw 1987/3 (and its successors) or Transit New Zealand signs approved for service and tourism activities, or signs denoting the name or the street number of premises or the location of a timetable or other details of a public utility or facility.
- b Temporary signs for community, educational, election, real estate and recreational events and during building construction. Signs shall comply with the safety standards in rule 6(b)i-v and shall be removed within two weeks following completion of that activity.
- c A sign for any public purpose or in connection with and on the same site as any utility, community facility or public reserve or public land managed for conservation, scenic or passive recreation purposes.

3 SIGNS OVER ROADS

- a Signs on, under or attached to verandas and/or signs attached to buildings which extend over roads shall comply with the requirements of the District Plan for signs in the zone in which the associated building is located.

4 SIGNS IN BUSINESS ZONES AND RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Except where specifically provided for as discretionary activities, the erection of signs shall be Permitted Activities in:

- All Business Zones; and
- front sites in Residential Zones which adjoin "Commercial Frontage" shown on the Plans;

provided that they comply with the General Requirements for All Signs and the following Standards.

- a signs attached to but under street verandas shall be:
 - i no closer than 2.5 metres to the footpath below.

- ii setback at least 500mm from the curblines of the road.
- b street verandas fascia signs shall:
 - i not protrude below the verandah.
 - ii be setback no less than 500mm from the kerb of the road.
 - iii be no closer than 2.5 metres to the footpath below.
- c signs above verandas but attached to the verandah shall not be more than 1.2m above the top of the verandah and shall be setback at least 500mm from the fascia line.
- d Signs attached to a structure or the face of a building shall not project more than:
 - i 50mm onto or over the public place if the sign is less than 2.5m above the public place.
 - ii 150mm onto or over the public place if the sign is 2.5m or more above the public place.
- e "A" frame, sandwich board, or other forms of moveable footpath or roadside signage shall be located where the sign causes no danger or inconvenience to pedestrians, particularly those who are visually impaired.

5 SIGNS IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES

In addition to the signs permitted in 2 above:

- a With the exception of retail premises, signs:
 - i shall be limited to a single externally facing sign for each road frontage, advertising a lawful use of the site, located on the site on which it occurs and advertising only services, products or events available or occurring on the site.
 - ii shall not be placed more than 3 metres above ground level or be higher than the eaves of a building to which they relate, whichever is the lesser.
 - iii shall not exceed 0.5 square metres in area.
 - iv shall have the following minimum lettering heights:
 - 150mm for the main message
 - 100mm for the property name
 - 75mm for the secondary message
 - v shall be at least 100 metres from any intersection or pedestrian crossing.
 - vi shall be at least 100 metres from any curve with advisory speed and/or chevron signing.

- b Signs for retail premises other than as provided for in "Commercial Frontage" areas in Rule 4, shall be a Controlled Activity in relation to their number, size, location and design.

6 SIGNS IN RURAL ZONES

The following signs are permitted in the Rural Zones:

- a Signs advertising the residential, home occupation, or farming use of a site which do not exceed 1 square metre in area.
- b Signs relating to a commercial, community, recreational, industrial, service, or visitor accommodation activity permitted by the Plan or by resource consent, subject to compliance with the following standards:
 - i Minimum distance between signs - 80m
 - ii Minimum visibility of sign - 250m
 - iii Minimum lettering height shall be:
 - 300mm for the main message
 - 200mm for the property name
 - 150mm for the secondary message
 - iv Minimum distance from intersection or pedestrian crossing - 200m
 - v Minimum distance from curve with advisory speed and/or chevron signing - 200m
 - vi Maximum area of signs - 2 square metres
 - vii Maximum number of on-site signs - 1 sign
 - viii All signs shall be located on the site to which the activity relates.
 - ix No signs shall be permitted in the Lakeside Protection Areas identified on the Planning Maps other than directional or identification signs.

7 DISCRETIONARY ACTIVITIES

The following signs are discretionary activities in the District, for which a resource consent must be obtained from the Council:

- a Any sign listed as permitted which exceeds any of the stated area, height, number, locational, or timing standards.
- b Signs with the potential to adversely effect traffic safety:
 - i Signs affixed to vehicles or trailers, and parked in a public place, road, public property or private property so as to be visible from a public place. This does not

- apply to advertising painted, or attached directly onto vehicles or trailers and incidental to the primary use of that vehicle or trailer.
- ii Flashing signs with lights or illumination which flashes, moves, rotates, varies in intensity, colour or size, and all other advertising devices of this nature.
 - iii Moving signs which visibly move, revolve, rotate, create an optical illusion of movement, or change colour, whether by electrical or other means, and all other advertising devices of this nature.
- c All signs on footpaths other than those listed as permitted in 3, and 4e above.
 - d All forms of off-site signage, except temporary signs provided for in Rule 2 a.
 - e Signs advertising the business of prostitution.

8 ASSESSMENT MATTERS - RESOURCE CONSENTS

- a When considering an application for signs which are a discretionary or controlled activity the Council shall give consideration to the potential adverse effects on traffic safety, the visual amenities of the locality, and if applicable the need for such signage in addition to the permitted signage of the zone.
- b The particular matters to be considered with respect to general traffic safety, are:
 - i the extent to which the signs may cause an obstruction to driving sight distances, traffic signs or signals, or unnecessarily intrude into a drivers field of view.
 - ii the potential adverse effects of the proposed sign on drivers concentration under all possible weather conditions.
 - iii the potential adverse effects of the sign on drivers who may have epilepsy or other similar medical conditions.
 - iv the extent that any sign resembles a traffic control sign or signal, or may make a traffic control sign or signal difficult to discern, with respect to both colour and shape, when considered from all possible driving angles. This includes signs which:
 - resemble in shape and/or colouration an official traffic control sign or signal, and may accordingly confuse motorists when in the

- vicinity of an intersection or other potential traffic hazard;
 - provide a confusing or dominating background, which could reduce the clarity or effectiveness of a traffic sign or signal;
 - invite drivers to turn, but are sited in such proximity to the vehicle entrance that there is no time to signal, slow down and turn safely; contain reflectors, and therefore have the potential to be confused with traffic control signs or signals at night.
- c The other general matters which may be considered are:
- i the visual impact of the sign and its potential effects on the amenities of the locality.
 - ii the potential of the sign to adversely effect public health and safety, or to reduce public convenience.
 - iii the likely cumulative planning effect of allowing the sign to be erected.
 - iv the need to impose conditions relating to the location, design and appearance of the sign and the period for which it may be erected, or operated.