

## 3.11 SIGNS

### 3.11.1 - OVERVIEW

Signs can have an adverse effect on the amenity values of the environment and can also compromise the safety and efficiency of the transportation network. Amenity values are defined by the Act as being:

*"those natural and physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to peoples appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence and cultural and recreational attributes."*

The effects of signs caused by inappropriate design, dimension, and location can detract from these qualities while also causing distraction to drivers using adjoining roads.

These effects will differ according to the particular environment within which the sign is located in, and consequently, policy has been developed for each identified Resource Area.

In addition to the policies and rules specific to each Resource Area, general provisions have been developed to apply throughout the District in order to control signs that are provided for throughout the entire District.

### 3.11.2 - THE ISSUES

The following are considered to be significant resource management issues facing the District in terms of signage;

- **Signs provide an important information function throughout both the towns and rural areas of the District.**

#### Explanation

*Signs generally have one or more of the following functions - identifying the location of an activity; promoting an activity; directing traffic or customers to an activity. These essential functions need to be recognised and provided for.*

- **The location, design and size of signs can adversely affect the amenities of the District.**

#### Explanation

*Inappropriate design, dimension and location can adversely affect the amenity values of the District. These issues need to be considered when developing signage policy. Particular areas of scenic or heritage value may need special consideration.*

- **The location, design and size of signs can compromise the safety and efficiency of the roading network.**

#### Explanation

*The aim of any sign is to either attract attention or direct attention. Badly designed or located signs can therefore create a significant traffic hazard by distracting drivers when full concentration is required. Road safety is therefore of paramount importance in determining sign policies.*

### 3.11.3 - GENERAL SIGN PROVISIONS

The following provisions are to apply throughout the District and are intended to complement the specific provisions of particular areas.

#### Objective SIGN.1 - Signs

**To reduce the adverse impacts of signs on traffic and the general amenity values of the District while recognising that signs can be a necessary and acceptable activity for a variety of reasons throughout the District.**

#### Policy SIGN.1

**To minimise the adverse effects of temporary advertising signs.**

#### Explanation

*A number of activities rely heavily on the use of temporary advertising signs. For example, signs for advertising the disposal of property and construction sites, signs that advertise forthcoming events and elections. Such signs can have adverse effects in terms of their size, design and location. (Refer Rules SIGN.1, 2, 3, 8)*

#### Policy SIGN.2

**To support the establishment of "Welcome To" signs at entrances to townships and tourist regions, and tourist information signs at appropriate locations throughout the District.**

#### Explanation

*"Welcome To" and tourist information signs are an important network of information signs throughout the District. Well designed "Welcome To" signs can greatly enhance local amenity, while tourist information signs are essential to the success of the growing tourism industry. (Refer Rule SIGN.3)*

### **Policy SIGN.3**

To encourage and support the use of international symbols.

#### **Explanation**

*With the increasing number of tourists visiting the District, Council considers it appropriate that international symbols are used wherever possible. (Refer Method SIGN.1)*

### **Policy SIGN.4**

To identify hoardings as a prohibited activity within the District.

#### **Explanation**

*Hoardings are large signs used to advertise and promote products not grown, produced or sold on the site upon which the hoarding is situated. While such types of advertising may be appropriate in large built up areas, they are not considered appropriate in the predominantly rural setting of the Southland District. (Refer Rule SIGN.4)*

### **Policy SIGN.5**

To minimise or avoid the adverse effects signs throughout the District can have on amenity values and the safety and convenience of the people of the District.

#### **Explanation**

*While the provisions of the Plan are designed to avoid signs that will detract from the amenities or compromise traffic safety, there will always be instances where signs compromising these values are erected.*

*Where it comes to Council's attention that a sign is causing concern to the general public, Council may, where it considers appropriate, require that a resource consent be applied for in respect of the sign. (Refer Rules SIGN.4, 5, 6, 7 and 8)*

### **3.11.4 - METHODS AND RULES**

#### **Rule SIGN.1 - Clarity**

The message on all signs must be clear, concise and of a clear lettering style. Clarity of the sign message is determined by the speed limit of the adjacent road. Table 7 comprises Transit New Zealand guidelines to acceptable lettering sizes in relation to speed limits and can be used as a guideline.

**Table 7 Minimum Lettering Sizes**

#### **Lettering Height (mm)**

<b>Regulatory Speed Limit Km/h</b>	<b>Main Message</b>	<b>Property Name</b>	<b>Secondary Message</b>
50	150	100	75
70	200	150	100
80	250	175	125
100	300	200	150

#### **Rule SIGN.2 - Permitted Signs**

Signs permitted throughout the District:

- (a) A sign not exceeding 1 m<sup>2</sup> in area advertising the disposal of land or premises on which it is located.
- (b) A sign not exceeding 3 m<sup>2</sup> in area erected on a construction site for which a building permit has been issued. No such sign shall be displayed for a period exceeding the duration of the construction period and shall include only details of the project and the names of parties connected therewith.
- (c) Any sign erected to direct, control or warn traffic with its dimensions fixed by Regulations, or any sign not exceeding 0.5 m<sup>2</sup> in area serving to denote the name of the street, the number or name of the premises, or indicating the location or timetable or other details of any public utility or facility.

#### **Reason**

*Temporary signs advertising the sale of property or a construction site can only serve their purpose if located on the property to which they relate. A restriction on the size of such signs will mitigate any adverse effects arising from their erection. Signs directing traffic and identifying public facilities are considered essential for information purposes.*

#### **Rule SIGN.3 - Restricted Discretionary Signs**

Signs for which a resource consent for a restricted discretionary activity is required:

- (a) A sign not exceeding 3 m<sup>2</sup> in area displayed for electioneering purposes, or advising forthcoming cultural, religious, educational or sporting events.

- (b) "Welcome To" and tourist information signs.
- (c) Sidewalk or sandwich board type signs provided only one per shop frontage will be permitted.

Council's discretion in respect of (a) to (c) above, is restricted to the design, location and size of the signs.

Written consent of affected parties and notification of the application will not be required for such applications unless it is a matter of public interest or unless the proposed sign is to be directed at traffic on any State Highway. In the latter case, the written consent of Transit New Zealand will be required.

**Reason**

*The above signs have been given "discretionary activity" status to enable Council to have control over the location, design and size of such signs. Notification will only be required where there may be an element of public interest, for example, the design may not be considered appropriate and accordingly it may be appropriate to have public input.*

**Rule SIGN.4 - Prohibited Signs**

Signs prohibited within the District;

- (a) Hoardings (as defined).
- (b) Signs placed on, or affixed to, vehicles and/or trailers which are parked on private and public property and streets, where the apparent purpose is to advertise a product, service or activity, or direct people to a business or activity on a nearby property.

(Note: this does not restrict signs placed on, or affixed to, vehicles, such as lettering, where the sign is incidental to the primary use of the vehicle).

**Reason**

*Such signs are erected for purely commercial reasons and do not relate to the vehicle site to which they are attached. These signs greatly detract from the amenities, while the vehicles or trailers to which they are affixed often occupy public parking space.*

**Rule SIGN.5 - International Symbols**

That international symbols be used where appropriate.

**Reason**

*With the increasing numbers of overseas tourists visiting the District, international symbols should be used where appropriate. This also helps create a uniformity in the District's information and tourist signs.*

**Rule SIGN.6 - Similarity to Traffic Signs**

Signs shall not be so designed to conflict with the colour and shape of recognised traffic signs.

**Reason**

*Signs coloured and shaped similar to standard traffic control warning signs can create confusion and therefore danger on the road.*

**Rule SIGN.7 - Signs Not Referred To**

Signs or signage not referred to in this section of the Plan or in Section 4 Resource Areas, or not meeting the criteria in the Plan require discretionary resource consent (unless otherwise stated) via a non-notified application. Council reserves the right to notify any proposal if, in Council's opinion, the amenities of the environment or safety of the roading network is adversely compromised.

**Reason**

*Council will consider such proposals as a discretionary resource consent. Where non-compliance is minor, Council will not notify the proposal, but where there are potentially significant effects and matters of public concern, such applications will be notified*

**Rule SIGN.8 - Signs Affecting Traffic Safety**

Signs shall not be located where they would add to driver distraction in a situation where road conditions demand full and uninterrupted driver concentration.

If at any time Council is of the opinion that the erection, construction or display of any sign may have an adverse effect on traffic safety or on the requirements of traffic control, Council shall require that an application for a resource consent for a discretionary activity be made for the sign.

**Reason**

*Signs can have a significant impact on traffic safety and where this is apparent a resource consent will be necessary.  
(Refer to Method SIGN.2 Assessment Criteria)*

### **Rule SIGN.9 - Signs Affecting Amenities**

If at any time the Council is of the opinion that the erection, construction, or display of any sign will detrimentally affect the amenities of any land or will detrimentally affect fire egress from any building, or will be visually inappropriate to the locality or architecture of the locality, the Council shall require that an application for a resource consent for a discretionary activity be made for that sign.

#### **Reason**

*How signs are designed and where they are placed affects the character of the environment. Consequently, to enhance and contribute to the area in which they are located signs should respect the scale and character of the environment. Where Council is of the opinion that a sign does not respect these issues, Council will require that a Resource Consent be received for that sign.*

*(Refer to Method SIGN.2 Assessment Criteria)*

### **Method SIGN.1 - International Symbols**

That international symbols be used where appropriate.

#### **Reason**

*With the increasing numbers of overseas tourists visiting the District, international symbols should be used where appropriate. This also helps create a uniformity in the District's information and tourist signs.*

### **Method SIGN.2 - Assessment Criteria**

Signs requiring resource consent will be assessed against the following criteria, unless otherwise stated:

- (a) Does the sign:
- Area (as described by the desired Conform to the desired future of the environmental outcomes for the area)?
  - Complement the dominant character of the landscape?
  - Complement the character and scale of buildings, site or area?
  - Rationalise or reduce the number of existing signs?
  - Adversely affect traffic safety?
- (b) In determining the assessment above the following design factors are relevant and should be supplied with any applications:

- Number of existing signs on the building subject to application.
- Placement (ie visibility).
- Dimensions, scale, shape and colour.
- Materials, construction details (eg means of attachment).
- Purpose of sign (ie identification, directional, general advertising).
- Reflectivity.
- Means of illumination.
- Provision of services, such as electricity, to the sign.
- Durability.
- Maintenance provisions.

(c) Does the sign need a building consent?

(d) The guidelines shown in Schedule 6.17.

(e) The publication "Advertising Signs and Road Safety: Design and Location" Land Transport Safety Authority and Transit New Zealand, 1993.

### **3.11.4 - ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS**

- (a) Signs to have no adverse effect on traffic safety throughout the District.
- (b) Signs complement the amenity values of the District rather than detract from those values.