

E23. Signs

E23.1. Background

Signs play an important role in identifying places and providing information including for business activities, direction or safety purposes. Signs are also an important advertising medium for businesses and can provide a source of revenue for building owners.

The number, type, location and size of signs can have adverse effects on the visual amenity of streets and buildings and on pedestrian traffic and safety. They may also have adverse effects on the character and heritage values of an area.

Billboards and signs that form part of an application for comprehensive development signage are subject to the provisions of this chapter. Some overlays also contain provisions relating to signs.

Most signs, other than billboards and comprehensive development signage, are managed under the Auckland Transport/Auckland Council Signage Bylaw 2015 or the Auckland Transport Elections Signs Bylaw 2013 (or any amended or updated version).

E23.2. Objectives [rcp/dp]

- (1) Appropriate billboards and comprehensive development signage contribute to the social and economic well-being of communities through identifying places, providing information including for convenience and safety purposes, and advertising goods and services.
- (2) Billboards and comprehensive development signage are managed to maintain traffic and pedestrian safety, historic heritage values and the visual amenity values of buildings and the surrounding environment.

E23.3. Policies [rcp/dp]

- (1) Require billboards and comprehensive development signage to meet the relevant permitted activity standards (for example building height) that apply in the zone in which they are located.
- (2) Require the placement, location and size of billboards and comprehensive development signage on buildings to not significantly detract from the profile or appearance of a building, or cover any significant architectural features on the façade of a building.
- (3) Enable billboards and comprehensive development signage while avoiding signs creating clutter or dominating the building or environment by controlling the size, number and location of signs.
- (4) Require traffic and pedestrian traffic safety standards to apply to billboards and comprehensive development signage, particularly to the wording, lighting and location of signs, and changeable message, illuminated, flashing or revolving signs.

- (5) Manage the effects of billboards and comprehensive development signage to maintain the values of scheduled historic heritage places and visual amenity values.
- (6) Limit the duration of consents for billboards where future land use and/or transport network changes are likely to result in the billboard being inappropriate from a site development or traffic safety perspective.

E23.4. Activity table

Table E23.4.1 Activity table – Billboards in zones and Table E23.4.2 Activity table – Billboards on street furniture in road reserves and comprehensive development signage specify the activity status for billboard signs and comprehensive development signage, pursuant to section 9(3) and sections 12(1), (2) and (3) of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Relationship to signage bylaws

Signs that are permitted by, or approved pursuant to, the Auckland Transport/Auckland Council Signage Bylaw 2015 or the Auckland Transport Elections Signs Bylaw 2013 are not subject to the provisions of the Plan.

Billboards in a road reserve or state highway network

In addition to the provisions of either a bylaw or E23 Signs, all billboards placed in the road reserve will require the prior approval of Auckland Transport, or in respect of billboards placed in the state highway network, the New Zealand Transport Agency.

Table E23.4.1 Activity Table – Billboards in zones [rcp/dp]

Activity		Activity status		
		Free-standing billboards	Billboards on a side or rear building façade	Billboards on a street facing building façade
(A1)	Residential – Large Lot Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A2)	Residential – Rural and Coastal Settlement Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A3)	Residential – Single House Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A4)	Residential – Mixed Housing Suburban Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A5)	Residential – Mixed Housing Urban Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A6)	Residential – Terrace Housing and Apartment Buildings Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A7)	Future Urban Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A8)	Rural – Rural Conservation Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A9)	Rural – Countryside Living Zone	NC	NC	NC

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(A10)	Rural – Rural Production Zone	D	D	D
(A11)	Rural – Mixed Rural Zone	D	D	NC
(A12)	Rural – Rural Coastal Zone	D	D	NC
(A13)	Open Space – Conservation Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A14)	Open Space – Informal Recreation Zone	NC	D	NC
(A15)	Open Space – Sport and Active Recreation Zone	D	D	NC
(A16)	Open Space – Civic Spaces Zone	D	D	NC
(A17)	Open Space – Community Zone	D	D	NC
(A18)	Business – Business Park Zone	D	RD	D
(A19)	Business – Mixed Use Zone	RD	RD	RD
(A20)	Business – General Business Zone	RD	RD	RD
(A21)	Business – Neighbourhood Centre Zone	NC	D	NC
(A22)	Business – Local Centre Zone	NC	D	NC
(A23)	Business – Town Centre Zone	RD	RD	RD
(A24)	Business – Metropolitan Centre Zone	RD	RD	RD
(A25)	Business – Light Industry Zone	RD	P	RD
(A26)	Business – Heavy Industry Zone	RD	P	P
(A27)	Special Character Areas Overlay – Residential and Business	NC	D	NC
(A28)	Business – City Centre Zone (except the residential precinct)	NC	RD	D
(A29)	City Centre Zone Residential Precinct	NC	NC	NC
(A30)	Strategic Transport Corridor Zone	NC	D	NC
(A31)	Special Purpose – Airports and Airfields Zone	D	RD	D
(A32)	Special Purpose – Cemetery Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A33)	Special Purpose – Healthcare Facility and Hospital Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A34)	Special Purpose – Major Recreation Facility Zone	D	D	D
(A35)	Special Purpose – Māori Purpose Zone	NC	D	NC
(A36)	Special Purpose – Quarry Zone	D	D	D
(A37)	Special Purpose – School Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A38)	Special Purpose – Tertiary Education Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A39)	Rural – Waitākere Ranges Zone Rural – Waitākere Foothills Zone	NC	NC	NC

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(A40)	Coastal – General Coastal Marine Zone	NC	NC	NC
(A41)	Coastal – Ferry Terminal Zone	NC	D	NC
(A42)	Coastal – Moorings Zone	Pr	Pr	Pr
(A43)	Coastal – Marina Zone	NC	D	NC
(A44)	Coastal – Defence Zone	NC	D	NC
(A45)	Coastal – Minor Port Zone	D	D	NC

Table E23.4.2 Activity table – Billboards on street furniture and in road reserves and comprehensive development signage [rcp/dp]

Activity		Activity status – all zones
Billboards on street furniture and in road reserves		
(A46)	Billboards on existing street furniture in a road reserve	P
(A47)	Replacement of billboards on existing street furniture in a road reserve with a billboard of the same, or substantially similar, size and shape	P
(A48)	Billboards on new street furniture	P
(A49)	Billboards that are less than 1.2m ² in area that are located in a road reserve adjoining any Business Zone (Note: Approval of Auckland Transport is required for any works in a road)	P
(A50)	New billboards, or the replacement of a billboard with a billboard of the same, or substantially similar size and shape, on existing or new street furniture in a road reserve that do not meet the Standards in E23.6	RD
(A51)	Altering or moving an existing lawfully established billboard within a zone where billboards are not a permitted activity, and where the change will not increase the overall display area or the extent of any non-compliance with the Standards in E23.6	RD
(A52)	Changing an existing lawfully established static billboard to a changeable message billboard in a zone where billboards are not provided for as a permitted activity	RD
Comprehensive development signage		
(A53)	Comprehensive development signage, including amendments or additions to existing approved comprehensive development signage	RD

E23.5. Notification

- (1) Any application for resource consent for an activity listed in Table E23.4.1 or Table E23.4.2 will be subject to the normal tests for notification under the relevant sections of the Resource Management Act 1991.

- (2) When deciding who is an affected person in relation to any activity for the purposes of section 95E of the Resource Management Act 1991 the Council will give specific consideration to those persons listed in Rule C1.13(4).

E23.6. Standards

All activities listed as a permitted activity in Tables E23.4.1 and E23.4.2 must comply with the following permitted activity standards.

E23.6.1. Billboards

- (1) Billboards must:
- (a) not be placed on or extend over any public open space or wharf;
 - (b) not be placed within 30 metres of a residential zone, a or an open space zone from which it can be seen;
 - (c) not be placed within a scheduled view shaft or within 30 metres of a scheduled historic heritage place; and
 - (d) not be attached to, or placed on:
 - (i) a street veranda; or
 - (ii) the roof of a building.
- (2) If lit internally or by external means (excluding digital billboards) a billboard must:
- (a) not be lit with an upwardly facing light source;
 - (b) not exceed a luminance of 800cds/m^2 when lit by an artificial light source between dusk and dawn; or
 - (c) be designed to reduce any glare or direct view of the light source when viewed by an observer at ground level 2 metres or more away from the billboard.
- (3) A digital billboard must include controls to ensure luminance does not exceed:
- (a) 5000cds/m^2 between sunrise and sunset; (daytime)
 - (b) 250cds/m^2 between sunset and sunrise (night time); and
 - (c) 250cds/m^2 during twilight; (twilight means from astronomical dawn to sunrise and from sunset until astronomical dusk with the times for sunrise, sunset and astronomical dusk (night) being those specified in the US Naval Portal).
- (4) A billboard shall not emit noise, smoke, steam or other matter.

- (5) A billboard must not be placed on a wall or part of a wall so that any part of the billboard is higher than the lowest point of the roof of the building adjoining the wall.
- (6) A billboard must not extend beyond the outer edge of any wall of the building on which it is located and the billboard must be contained entirely within the visual profile of the building.
- (7) A billboard must not extend more than:
 - (a) 200mm from the face of any building or structure to which it is attached if it is a static billboard; or
 - (b) 400mm from the face of any building if it is a changeable message billboard.
- (8) A billboard, when viewed from any public place, must not obscure (partially or totally) any window or window aperture, whether or not it is glazed and used as a window.
- (9) A billboard must not be installed on a building that has been altered or modified for the purpose of installing the billboard.
- (10) A billboard, when placed on a wall, must not exceed an area equal to 25 per cent of the wall area or 50m², whichever is the lesser.
- (11) A billboard, when mounted on a wall must not be placed so that any part of the sign is:
 - (a) greater than 30 metres above ground level;
 - (b) less than 3 metres above ground level; and
 - (c) within 3 metres of the top of any wall on any building of seven storeys or more.
- (12) A billboard must not be comprised of window film above the ground floor of any building.
- (13) A billboard must not display any image that:
 - (a) resembles or is likely to be confused with any traffic sign or signal;
 - (b) contains reflective, fluorescent or phosphorescent materials that will reflect headlights, or distract or interfere with a road user's vision; or
 - (c) uses flashing or revolving lights or lasers or any other method of illumination that will dazzle or distract drivers.
- (14) A changeable message billboard must not use images that could be mistaken by an approaching motorist for a traffic control device by its colour, shape or appearance.

- (15) A billboard must not be placed on any traffic control devices or their supporting poles, posts or structures.
- (16) A billboard must not be displayed on any median strip, kerb projection, roundabout, or any other traffic separation structures on any road.
- (17) A billboard must not be displayed on any power pole, lighting pole, bollard, rubbish bin, plant box, pylon, public sign or other similar structures in a public place.
- (18) A billboard must have lettering of at least 120mm high in areas where the billboard is directed at a road where the speed limit is 60km/h or less.
- (19) A billboard must have lettering of at least 150mm high in areas where the billboard is directed at a road where the speed limit exceeds 60km/h.
- (20) Free-standing billboards must:
 - (a) be at least 4 metres high but not greater than 6 metres high and 13 metres long and have a display face that does not exceed 50m²;
 - (b) be the only free-standing sign on the site which is greater than 1.5 metres high;
 - (c) not be placed within;
 - (i) 5 metres of any building that is higher than 1.5 metres;
 - (ii) 10 metres of any other free-standing sign, including a billboard sign on the same site or footpath signs placed directly outside the same site;
 - (iii) 2 metres of any free-standing sign on another site under different ownership; or
 - (iv) 2m of the side boundary of any site if the site has a frontage width greater than 6m.
 - (d) not obstruct, obscure or impair a motorist's safe line sight of any corner, bend, vehicle crossing pedestrian crossing, or intersection, with the safe intersection sight distance being measured according to the Austroads Guide to Road Design;
 - (e) not obstruct, obscure or impair the view of a motorist of any traffic control device (sign, signal or notice); and
 - (f) not use images, including changeable messages, that could be mistaken by an approaching motorist for a traffic control device in colour, shape or appearance.

E23.6.2. Billboards on existing street furniture in a road reserve, or the replacement of billboards on existing street furniture in a road reserve with a billboard of the same, or substantially similar, size and shape

- (1) A billboard on existing street furniture in a road reserve, or the replacement of billboards on existing street furniture in a road reserve with a billboard of the same, or substantially similar, size and shape must comply with all of the following:
- (a) the billboard must be no larger than the street furniture it is attached to;
 - (b) the billboard must not be placed within a view shaft or within 30 metres of a scheduled historical heritage place;
 - (c) if lit internally or by external means (excluding digital billboards) it must:
 - (i) not be lit with an upwardly facing light source;
 - (ii) not exceed a luminance of 800cds/m² when lit by an artificial light source between dusk and dawn; and
 - (iii) be designed to reduce any glare or direct view of the light source when viewed by an observer at ground level 2 metres or more away from the billboard.

E23.6.3. Billboards on new street furniture

- (1) Billboards on new street furniture must:
- (a) comply with Standards E23.6.2(1)(a) to (c)(i), (ii), (iii);
 - (b) not be located where the land immediately adjoining the billboard is:
 - (i) within a Special Character Areas Overlay – Residential and Business; or
 - (ii) zoned Rural – Rural Conservation Zone, Rural – Countryside Living Zone or Open Space – Conservation Zone, Rural – Waitākere Ranges Zone, or Rural – Waitākere Foothills Zone, unless the street furniture is on an arterial road.
- (2) If the billboard is a digital billboard it must include controls to ensure that the luminance does not exceed:
- (a) 5000cds/m² between sunrise and sunset; (daytime)
 - (b) 250cds/m² between sunset and sunrise (night time); and
 - (c) 250cds/m² during twilight; (twilight means from astronomical dawn to sunrise and from sunset until astronomical dusk with the times for sunrise, sunset and astronomical dusk (night) being those specified in the US Naval Portal).

- (3) A billboard must not extend greater than 200mm from the face of the building or structure to which it is attached if it is a static billboard.
- (4) A billboard must not extend greater than 400mm from the face of the building or structure it is attached to if it is a changeable message billboard.
- (5) A billboard must not display an image that does any of the following:
 - (a) resembles or is likely to be confused with any traffic sign or signal:
 - (i) contains reflective, fluorescent or phosphorescent materials that will reflect headlights, or distract or interfere with a road user's vision; or
 - (ii) uses flashing or revolving lights or lasers or any other method of illumination that will dazzle or distract drivers.

E23.7. Assessment – controlled activities

There are no controlled activities in this section.

E23.8. Assessment – restricted discretionary activities

E23.8.1. Matters of discretion

The Council will restrict its discretion to all the following matters when assessing a restricted discretionary resource consent application:

- (1) visual amenity;
- (2) scale and location;
- (3) lighting and traffic safety;
- (4) duration of consent; and
- (5) cumulative effects.

E23.8.2. Assessment criteria

The Council will consider the relevant assessment criteria for restricted discretionary activities in Activity Table E23.4.1 Billboards in zones and Activity Table E23.4.2 Billboards on street furniture in road reserves and comprehensive development signage comprehensive development signage from the list below:

- (1) visual amenity, scale and location:
 - (a) the extent to which comprehensive development signage, free-standing billboards, or billboards on a side, rear or street facing building façade are appropriate in terms the zone they are located in taking into account all of the following:
 - (i) the scale, form and type of billboard;
 - (ii) the location of the signs or billboard in relation to other signs and billboards and adjacent structures and buildings;
 - (iii) the size of the site in which the signs or billboard will be located;

- (iv) the relationship with the streetscape, landscape and open space areas in the vicinity of the proposed signs or billboard; and
 - (v) the length of time the signs or billboard will be in place.
- (b) the extent to which the signs or billboard, when attached to a building, will appear to be an integrated element of the building and positively relate to structural bays, structural elements, architectural features, building proportions and the overall design of the building;
 - (c) the extent to which the signs or billboard structure are visually integrated with the existing built and/or natural environment;
 - (d) whether the signs or billboard structures are simple and visually recessive in terms of form and colour, and are designed to discourage access for graffiti on the image displayed;
 - (e) whether the signs or billboard detracts from the visual amenity of any public open space from which it can be seen, including the characteristics of the streetscape, natural environment, landscaping and open space;
 - (f) whether the signs or billboard, if located in close proximity to a scheduled historic heritage place, adversely affects the visual amenity or detracts from the visual qualities that are fundamental to the historic heritage values of the scheduled historic heritage place;
 - (g) whether a sign or billboard that will replace an existing sign or billboard on a building integrates with the building's form, shape and architectural features; and
 - (h) whether the sign or billboard will dominate the outlook from any dwelling or public open space.
- (2) lighting and traffic safety:
- (a) the extent to which lighting associated with a sign or billboard is controlled to minimise adverse effects on the visual amenity of the surrounding environment during both day and night time (and the transition times between) having regard to:
 - (i) the location of the signs or billboard;
 - (ii) the sign's orientation to the sun; and
 - (iii) the variance of ambient light levels within the area.

- (b) the degree of compliance with Standards E23.6.1(2)(a),(b),(c) or E23.6.1(3)(a), (b), (c) and whether lighting levels, light spill or glare from illuminated or, changeable message signs or billboards that do not meet these standards will cause unreasonable levels of glare and discomfort to any person or to traffic safety (the controls of Tables 2.1 and 2.2 of Australian Standards AS 4282 - 1997 (Control of the Obtrusive Effects of Outdoor Lighting) may be used to determine glare and discomfort);
 - (c) whether there will be adverse effects on the amenity values of the surrounding area and traffic safety from signs or billboards that are capable of displaying variable images more than once every eight seconds, taking into account:
 - (i) the proposed transition time between images;
 - (ii) the dwell time of each image;
 - (iii) the number of image changes per hour; and
 - (iv) the number of consecutive related images.
 - (d) the extent to which the location, operation, lighting or design of the signs or billboard will have adverse effects on traffic safety.
- (3) duration of consent:
- (a) whether the duration of a resource consent should be limited, taking into account the future land use and/or transport network changes that are likely to affect the site or location and result in the signs or billboard being inappropriate from a site development or traffic safety perspective.
- (4) cumulative effects:
- (a) whether the signs or billboard, in conjunction with existing signs nearby, will create visual clutter or other adverse cumulative effects.

E23.9. Special information requirements

There are no special information requirements in this section.