

Signs Issues and Options

Summary

We think the District Plan rules need revising so they:

- 1 are clear
- 2 are easy to understand and use
- 3 allow for adequate signage on single buildings with multiple tenancies in the town centre, business and industrial zones
- 4 require sign platforms on new buildings in the Town Centre zones
- 5 allow for appropriate event signs (including off site signs)
- 6 ensure the activity status for signs are clear
- 7 link to design guidance for signs
- 8 provide a clear consent process for signs

What do you think?

Please send your comments to:
Policy & Planning
Queenstown Lakes District Council
Private Bag 50072, Queenstown 9348

Email services@qldc.govt.nz

Or comment online at
www.qldc.govt.nz/district_plan_review

Comments should be received by 30 November 2012 although feedback on these issues will be welcome at any time during the review process.

What are we doing?

We're currently reviewing the District Plan and looking at what works well and what needs to be changed. As part of this process we've been monitoring the provisions for the management of signs and how they are working.

This has helped us identify some areas that we think can be improved and we'd like your feedback.

You can see the full monitoring report at www.qldc.govt.nz/monitoring.

The Current Situation

Signs are controlled through the Signs Bylaw and the District Plan. If a sign complies with the provisions of the Bylaw a sign permit alone is required (cost \$146).

However if a sign does not comply with the provisions of the Bylaw a resource consent for a non complying activity is required (currently an initial deposit of \$820).

What Mechanism to Use?

The current dual system of the Signs Bylaw and the District Plan can be confusing, time consuming and costly. This is frustrating for retailers in the town centre, business and industrial zones where signs are anticipated. We recognise that whatever system is used it needs to be clear, simple and cost effective.

District Plan (Council's preferred option) Signs could be managed solely under the District Plan (removing the Bylaw). Typical signs would be a permitted activity (meaning no resource consent or signs permit and no cost). If the sign does not meet the permitted standards a resource consent for a discretionary activity would be required.

We recognise that the current rules need changing to allow typical signs, especially in town centre, business and industrial zones with only those outside the standards requiring a resource consent.

Signs Bylaw Alternatively we can stay with the current system of requiring a signs permit for a sign and if these sign bylaw limits are exceeded a resource consent (non-complying activity) is required.

Proposed Changes

The monitoring report on signs identified a number of possible amendments to the current District Plan.

Definition of signs Revise the definition of a sign so it is clear and easy to understand. Should any of the following be defined as signs?



Signs that are visible through or in a shop window



Sculptures



A sign draped over a vehicle



Signs on parked trailers



Corporate colours

Activity Status Currently if signs don't comply with permitted activity standards they become a non-complying activity which makes it hard to get a resource consent. We believe this is too onerous and that they should become a discretionary activity which would simplify the consent process.

Size Limits Currently the signs rules are structured so that tenants in multi tenanted buildings often have to apply for a resource consent for a standard sign. This is expensive, time consuming and inefficient. Permitted sign rules in town centres, industrial, and business areas need to be amended to enable an allowance for all tenancies in multi tenanted buildings.

Event Signs Some events signs need to be located off site. The Bylaw only allows this through a dispensation which is an inefficient process. We think that the event signs rules need to be amended to allow for off-site signs.

Sign Platforms Where a building is altered or a new building erected in one of the town centre zones the applicant is encouraged to include signage platforms. This ensures that designers think about the location and size of signs at the design phase. However the District Plan rules do not require this. Should the rules be amended to require signage platforms on new buildings in the town centre zones?

Design Guidance Would informal design guidance for signs in town centres be useful for retailers, sign writers and planners?

What do you think?