



Third party signs on and visible from the state highway corridor

Planning Policy Manual

Waka Kotahi operational transport and land use planning guidance

28th November 2023

Version 1.2

Document information

Purpose

This guidance forms part of the Planning Policy Manual (PPM) which provides a hub for operational transport and land use planning guidance to assist Waka Kotahi staff and external stakeholders to navigate through relevant planning processes. PPM guidance is grouped into three parts:

- **Part I** **Third party land use developments (LUDs)**
- Part II Operational responses to Waka Kotahi strategic planning policy direction
- Part III Planning the transport network

This guide is part of the PPM Part 1.

Availability

This document is held in electronic form by the Waka Kotahi Poutiaki Taiao Environmental Planning Group and on the Waka Kotahi internet (nzta.govt.nz)

Guidance owner

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Document History

Version	Date	Authors	Description of changes
V1		Gemma Kean, Caroline Horrox	
V1.1			Minor referencing changes
V1.2		C Horrox	Minor update to Table 1 to clarify sign support requirements

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1 What this guide covers

This document is designed to assist Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency (Waka Kotahi) staff, local authorities, landowners and other parties to understand the requirements associated with third party signs which are within or visible from the state highway corridor.

It does not cover official road signs managed by Waka Kotahi¹ or other road controlling authorities.

This document supersedes advice on advertising signs outlined in the Transit (2007) Planning Policy Manual (version 1) Manual No: SP/M/001, the *Advertising signs on state highways SEP 2014 | 14-215* brochure and the general election sign guidance 31 August 2020.

2 Introduction

Third party signs include any permanent or temporary sign, placard, handbill, writing, image, engraving, carving, blimp, laser display or tri-vision device. Such signs might be fixed to, incorporated in, or painted on any building, parked vehicle or trailer, post or other structure.

Third party signs within or adjacent and visible from the state highway corridor are used to convey information to those using the transport network. Appropriately located and designed signs benefit the advertiser by providing clearly legible, effective advertising. The safe and efficient operation of the state highway network requires that these signs do not compromise road safety (by causing driver distraction or a traffic hazard) or cause confusion with official road signs.

Improving road safety is a priority for Waka Kotahi. Waka Kotahi is working with partner organisations to deliver *Road to Zero*, which aims to reduce deaths and serious injuries on New Zealand's roads, cycleways and footpaths. State highway system management is one of the five key *Road to Zero* focus areas. The Road to Zero in turn is guided by the *Safe System* approach which seeks to create a safe and forgiving road system that makes the safety of people a priority.

Waka Kotahi manages third party signs within the state highway corridor primarily through the *NZ Transport Agency (Signs on State Highways) Bylaw 2010* (the Signs Bylaw).

Comprehensive design guidance on advertising signs (both on and visible from the state highway) is contained within the *Traffic Control Devices Manual 2011 – Part 3 Advertising Signs* (TCD Manual).

Signs outside of but visible from the state highway corridor are managed via district plans and/or local bylaws. Waka Kotahi actively seeks district plan provisions to ensure that all third-party signs are appropriately designed and located to provide for the safe operation of the land transport system. Waka Kotahi typically seeks affected party status for signs requiring resource consent. Where affected party approval is required, Waka Kotahi encourages early engagement by an applicant to ensure signs are designed to satisfy the required safety standards.

Using the Signs Bylaw, the TCD Manual and the Road to Zero/Safe systems as reference points, Waka Kotahi will assess each sign proposal on its merits, having regard to its purpose, nature, location and safety impacts.

Note: Information summarised from the TCD manual may not be current or complete. Users of this Guideline should consult the latest version of the TCD manual to confirm specific technical requirements.

3 All signs – key principles

Advertising signs are specifically designed to attract attention and make an impact on viewers. As a first principle, Waka Kotahi takes a precautionary approach and seeks to minimise driver distraction within the

¹ For official road sign information refer to the Traffic control guidance devices manual <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/traffic-control-devices-manual/>.

roading environment that impacts on the driving task. Any distraction within the roading environment is a safety risk.

Safety issues arising from signs include:

- Driver distraction, by taking unnecessary attention off the road, particularly if the messaging is overly distracting, or text is difficult to read from the state highway
- Higher speed environments reduce the ability for state highway users to take in multiple pieces of information, and elevate the potential consequences of any distraction
- A proliferation of signs can create visual clutter which reduces the effectiveness of official road signs
- Poorly located signs may reduce visibility at intersections and bends or create a hazard for road users;
- Signs that attempt to mimic official road signage may cause confusion; and
- Poorly erected or maintained signs may fall or be blown onto the road carriageway.

Waka Kotahi seeks to minimise the adverse effects of signs on the safe and efficient operation of the state highway system and on the customer experience of travelling on the state highway.

To manage this, Waka Kotahi seeks to control the number, location, size and form of signs directed at motorists on the state highway corridor.

In most cases, Waka Kotahi is not supportive of general advertising signs, particularly in high speed environments. If signs are directed at motorists on the state highway corridor these should be designed and located to be consistent with the design and location principles as outlined in Table 1 below which have been generally guided by the TCD manual.

The general principles in Table 1 also apply to digital signs. Section 6 includes further digital sign information.

Table 1 Best practice design principles for all signs

Issue	Design principle
Speed zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For safety reasons Waka Kotahi discourages advertising signs located in speed zones above 70 km/hr.
Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs should be at a scale appropriate to their context. This includes the speed zone, District Plan zoning and rules, and the surrounding environment.
Messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All signs should be concise and easily read (i.e. one key message, legible font styles, letter sizes and adequate letter spacing). The TCD Manual Table 6.2 sets out minimum recommended letter sizes on roadside advertising signs • Graphics and design should be legible and appropriate to the related activity • Signs should avoid colours, symbols, designs, or messages that could be confused with official road signs. • As motorists travel at higher speeds, they have less time to read and respond to the sign’s message. For this reason, signs located in 70 km/hr speed zones or greater may have additional requirements such as a larger lettering size, greater forward sight distances and larger setbacks from intersections and other signs.
Position in relation to the road and traffic control devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs should be located at a right angle to the state highway and designed/positioned to avoid vehicle headlight reflection and glare. • Signs should not obscure official road signs, visibility at intersections, accessways, bends or parts of the road (including pedestrian facilities). • Section 5.5 of the TCD Manual recommends that advertising signs should not be located within 100m and 200m in urban and rural areas respectively of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ intersections ○ permanent regulatory or warning signs ○ curves (with chevron signing)

Issue	Design principle																		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o pedestrian crossings. 																		
Sight distances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TCD Manual recommends minimum sight distances to third-party signs based on the time it takes for a driver to read and absorb a sign of the recommended complexity. They recognise that as travel speed increases, a drivers' focal point increases and their peripheral vision consequently recedes (refer to Figure 5.1 <i>Extent of drivers' field of vision</i> TCD Manual). <p>Minimum forward sight distance to roadside advertising signs (Table 5.1 of the TCD Manual)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="379 555 1394 891"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="379 555 1102 636">Posted speed limit</th> <th data-bbox="1102 555 1394 636">Minimum visibility distance (metres)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 636 1102 685">50 km/hr</td> <td data-bbox="1102 636 1394 685">80m</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 685 1102 734">60 km/hr</td> <td data-bbox="1102 685 1394 734">105m</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 734 1102 784">70 km/hr</td> <td data-bbox="1102 734 1394 784">130m</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 784 1102 833">80 km/hr</td> <td data-bbox="1102 784 1394 833">175m</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 833 1102 882">100 km/hr</td> <td data-bbox="1102 833 1394 882">250m</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>To avoid signs from obstructing visibility, Table 5.2 of the TCD Manual also sets out requirements for maintaining sight distances at driveways and intersections for a range of speed limits.</p>	Posted speed limit	Minimum visibility distance (metres)	50 km/hr	80m	60 km/hr	105m	70 km/hr	130m	80 km/hr	175m	100 km/hr	250m						
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70 km/hr	130m																		
80 km/hr	175m																		
100 km/hr	250m																		
Spacing between signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient spacing between advertising signs is important to avoid the proliferation of signs, reduce visual clutter and ensure drivers have sufficient time to process the information being presented. • Third-party signs should be located at least 100 metres from an official road sign or traffic signal in a ≤ 70km/hr speed environment, and at least 200 metres from an official road sign or traffic signal in a > 70km/hr speed environment. • The TCD Manual sets out the recommended spacing between roadside third-party signs. This is provided in the table below: <p>Minimum distances between adjacent roadside advertising signs (Table 5.3 of the TCD Manual)</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="379 1391 1394 1727"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="379 1391 831 1471">Posted speed limit</th> <th data-bbox="831 1391 1155 1471">Minimum recommended spacing (metres)</th> <th data-bbox="1155 1391 1394 1471">Desirable spacing (metres)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 1471 831 1520">50 km/hr*</td> <td data-bbox="831 1471 1155 1520">50m*</td> <td data-bbox="1155 1471 1394 1520">80m*</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 1520 831 1570">60 km/hr</td> <td data-bbox="831 1520 1155 1570">55m</td> <td data-bbox="1155 1520 1394 1570">100m</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 1570 831 1619">70 km/hr</td> <td data-bbox="831 1570 1155 1619">60m</td> <td data-bbox="1155 1570 1394 1619">150m</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 1619 831 1668">80 km/hr</td> <td data-bbox="831 1619 1155 1668">70m</td> <td data-bbox="1155 1619 1394 1668">200m</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="379 1668 831 1718">100 km/hr</td> <td data-bbox="831 1668 1155 1718">80m</td> <td data-bbox="1155 1668 1394 1718">250m</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* Signs in a 50 km/hr speed limit zone can often be located closer than 80 metres apart (one sign per site) as a permitted activity under the relevant District Plan. In these cases, Waka Kotahi will use its discretion where an 80m setback between signs cannot be achieved.</p>	Posted speed limit	Minimum recommended spacing (metres)	Desirable spacing (metres)	50 km/hr*	50m*	80m*	60 km/hr	55m	100m	70 km/hr	60m	150m	80 km/hr	70m	200m	100 km/hr	80m	250m
Posted speed limit	Minimum recommended spacing (metres)	Desirable spacing (metres)																	
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60 km/hr	55m	100m																	
70 km/hr	60m	150m																	
80 km/hr	70m	200m																	
100 km/hr	80m	250m																	
Illumination and glare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sign should not reflect or emit light of enough intensity that might impair a driver's vision. 																		

Issue	Design principle
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All internally or externally illuminated signs should comply with the maximum luminance given in table 6.1 of the TCD Manual.
Construction and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signs should be constructed, erected, and maintained to minimise the risk of being blown onto the state highway and creating a hazard to other users. Damaged or obsolete signs should be removed or replaced promptly. Supports should be designed appropriately for the location to avoid creating a hazard to other transport corridor users, including pedestrians and cyclists.

Note: Some services (eg accommodation or motorist services) or tourist sites may be able to obtain approval from Waka Kotahi for an official road sign. Further detail on official road sign standards and criteria is provided in the [Traffic Control Devices Manual Part 2 – Direction, Service and General Guide Signs 2011](#).

3.1 Amenity considerations

Control of the amenity effects of signs outside the state highway road reserve is primarily a local authority function. The local authority typically provides guidance for signs through its District Plan or bylaws.

Waka Kotahi may seek to manage or address the amenity effects of signs where state highway landscaping, amenity or urban design outcomes are potentially compromised. This is likely to be particularly relevant to larger signs (i.e. billboards) proposed along the themed highways known for their scenic value (such as the Twin Coast Discovery or the Great Alpine highways) or other environmentally sensitive areas, including those with specific cultural/natural/ heritage or conservation values.

Where amenity is a consideration, Waka Kotahi will seek to minimise visual impacts on surrounding environments, reduce visual clutter and avoid obscuring views. In some cases, it may be appropriate for the sign owner to provide mitigating amenity, such as landscaping to offset adverse effects of the sign structure.

4 Signs visible from the state highway

Waka Kotahi seeks to ensure that signs visible from the state highway corridor (but not located within it) are safe and appropriate. Waka Kotahi will advocate for the prevention of signs outside but visible from the state highway that may adversely affect traffic safety.

Waka Kotahi primarily utilises the resource consent process to achieve this. Waka Kotahi will seek affected party status for signs requiring consent under a district plan that potentially affect the state highway. Waka Kotahi will assess the suitability of these signs and may recommend consent conditions and/or provide written approval (or may oppose).

In urban environments where the speed is less than 70 km/hr, Waka Kotahi may defer to the local authority for the management of signs located outside the state highway corridor (i.e. for signs on private land) where the risk to the network is deemed to be low.

Where consent is required, applicants are encouraged to discuss their proposals with Waka Kotahi and the territorial authority at an early stage in the consenting process to ensure any requirements can be incorporated into the consent application to avoid changes post lodgement.

As well as requiring resource consent under a district plan, permission may also be required from local authorities under any relevant local authority bylaws and/or to locate signs on parks and other public land owned or administered by them.

4.1 Assessment considerations

Signs on private property that are visible from the state highway have the same potential to cause adverse safety effects as signs located within the state highway corridor.

Advertising signs are designed to attract attention. Distracting drivers' attention away from the driving task is particularly dangerous when located in high volume and high speed environments. For this reason, Waka Kotahi will not support general advertising signs (i.e. for commercial marketing of products or services) directed at drivers on the State Highway network where they are located adjacent to state highways where the AADT (Annual Average Daily Traffic) is greater than 10,000 VPD (Vehicles Per Day) and speeds are also greater than 70 km/h.

In speed zones above 70km/h, Waka Kotahi will generally advocate for no more than one sign visible from a state highway on any site. Signs should relate to activities occurring on that site.

Signs on private property should be designed and located to comply with the design principles outlined in Table 1 and the TCD Manual Part 3 requirements. We will also consider relevant sign requirements in the relevant district plan. Consideration will be given to:

- Sign size and whether it is of a scale appropriate to its location (District Plan requirements may be relevant)
- Sign location and context (e.g. whether attached to a building or standalone, urban or rural environment etc)
- The number of other approved signs in the vicinity.

4.2 Compliance

Signs on private property that are visible from the state highway are regulated by the territorial authority through the relevant district plan and/or any applicable local bylaws. These are the responsibility of the territorial authority to enforce. In cases where signs are unlawful (i.e. do not have the necessary consent or are not compliant with any consent conditions our approval has been given subject to), we will seek that the territorial authority takes compliance action.

5 Signs within the state highway corridor

Waka Kotahi manages third party signs within the state highway corridor primarily through the [NZ Transport Agency \(signs on state highways\) Bylaw 2010](#) (Signs Bylaw). The state highway corridor includes the carriageway (i.e., the part of the road set aside for use by wheeled traffic) and the roadside verge and associated land – usually between fence lines.

The Bylaw does not apply behind the kerb line of a state highway in speed environments of 50 km/hr or less. These areas are regulated by the relevant territorial authority.

Under the Signs Bylaw all advertising signs on motorways are prohibited. It is also illegal to place third party signs on or above the state highway carriageway (i.e., the part of the road set aside for use by, or useable for, wheeled traffic). For safety reasons, Waka Kotahi discourages applications for signs in speed zones above 70km/hr.

The Signs Bylaw contains schedules outlining design, construction, and location requirements for signs, including temporary local banners and requirements for road safety billboards.

All signs potentially allowable under the Bylaw require Waka Kotahi written approval. Delegation to approve signs under the Signs Bylaw sit with the Waka Kotahi Safety Engineers. Waka Kotahi may consent to a sign if it is satisfied that the sign meets the relevant requirements of the Bylaw and any requirements of the relevant local authority, and it considers that the colours, wording legend or siting of the sign will not:

- Obscure or cause confusion with an official road sign or any traffic sign
- Cause alarm or distract the attention of people operating vehicles on the State highway
- Create or contribute to a traffic hazard; or

- In any other way compromise the safe and efficient operation of the State highway.

Waka Kotahi at its discretion may consider and rely on any report from the Police, any relevant authority, employee, or consultant commissioned by Waka Kotahi whether or not prepared in respect of the particular application and give the applicant an opportunity to provide further information. If an application is refused, Waka Kotahi must give reasons to the applicant. Any consent granted under the bylaw may be subject to:

- Time limits
- Conditions controlling maintenance/maintenance activities; and
- Conditions controlling sign size, colour, wording, and siting.

Table 2 Signs on State Highways Bylaw Standards

This table applies to all signs located within the state highway corridor except temporary local banners and road safety billboards (refer to section 5.2).

Issue	Requirement	Speed zone applicability
Location and position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fixed sign must be at least 5 metres from the edge of the carriageway. • Sandwich boards must be at least 2 m from the edge of the carriageway. 	70km/hr or less speed zones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All signs must be at least 5 metres from the edge of the carriageway • The sign must be located to provide an unrestricted view to the motorist for a minimum distance of 180 metres. 	Speed zones above 70km/hr
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bottom edge of the sign must not be more than 2.5 metres above road level or ground. 	All speed zones
Sign Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sign must not exceed 1 square metre in area or 2 metres for any edge dimension 	All speed zones
Design elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The colour combination used for the sign's background, wording and legend must not be likely to cause confusion with any of those used for any official road sign or traffic sign • The sign must not display more than 6 words, symbols, or graphics and no more than 40 characters. 	All speed zones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lettering and symbols used must be at least 120 millimetres in height 	70km/hr or less speed zones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lettering and symbols used must be at least 160 millimetres in height and using a font acceptable to Waka Kotahi 	Speed zones above 70km/hr
Reflective materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No reflective materials permitted 	All speed zones
Illumination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No external or internal illumination permitted 	All speed zones

Moving parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sign must not contain moving parts or a dynamic display 	All speed zones
Sign supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Bylaw requirements but Waka Kotahi requires sign supports to meet the requirements regarding strength, rigidity and impact performance as described in the Waka Kotahi specification <i>P24:2020 Specification for permanent traffic signs</i> 	70km/hr or less speed zones
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sign supports must meet the requirements regarding strength, rigidity and impact performance as described in the Waka Kotahi <i>P24:2020 Specification for permanent traffic signs</i> 	Speed zones above 70km/hr

While not a specific requirement of the Signs Bylaw, all signs and supports in the state highway corridor should be installed clear of any underground services.

5.1 Temporary signs for community events

Community events are events of a civic, public, or educational nature, such as school fairs, city festivals, and other public gathering events. Temporary signs for community events located in the state highway road reserve may be approved provided they do not pose a safety risk to road users and comply with the Bylaw requirements. Waka Kotahi will require these signs to be installed no more than two weeks prior to the event and removed 24 hours after the event.

5.2 Temporary banners

A 'temporary local banner' means a banner for a specific event in the area where the banner extends across a state highway carriageway. Temporary banner requirements are set out in Table 3.

Table 3 Temporary Local Banner requirements

Time period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must not remain in place for more than 2 weeks in a year
Speed environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must not be located over any section of state highway with a speed limit greater than 50 km/hr
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lowest part of the banner must be at least 6 m above road height Must be located at least 100 m from any intersection Must be located at least 50 m from a pedestrian crossing
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be fixed securely Must be at least 300 mm in height Must not display more than 6 words or symbols No reflective materials are permitted

5.3 Signs providing public health and safety advice

Waka Kotahi may authorise a sign (including imposing any conditions deemed appropriate) which does not comply with the Signs Bylaw schedules if the purpose of the sign is to provide advice or information to the public in relation to health and safety issues or risks. Refer to the requirements for road safety billboards under the [Fourth Schedule of the Signs Bylaw](#) and [SMO12 State Highway Control Manual Part 16 – Consolidated Signs Sections 2017](#).

5.4 Licence fees

The Signs bylaw allows Waka Kotahi to charge an annual licence fee to construct, maintain or display a third-party sign within the state highway corridor. Fees may be waived where the sign is for non-profit or charitable purposes.

5.5 Monitoring and enforcement

The Signs Bylaw provides for the revocation of consent given under the Bylaw and the removal of signs.

Unapproved signs located within the state highway corridor should be removed by the applicant in the first instance. Waka Kotahi may also remove unapproved signs, or signs that do not meet the necessary Signs Bylaw requirements, or that pose a safety risk.

Responsibility for monitoring and removing signs within the state highway corridor is typically delegated to the Waka Kotahi network maintenance contractor.

5.6 Official Road Signs

Some major local facilities or features and tourist facilities may be eligible for an official road sign. The criteria for these are currently stated in the [Manual of traffic signs and markings \(MOTSAM\) Part 1: traffic signs](#). Applications for these are typically assessed by the Regional Safety Engineer.

6 Digital signs

Digital signs are becoming more prevalent. As with other signs directed towards roads, they are designed to capture vehicle occupant attention. Therefore, driver distraction remains the primary concern for Waka Kotahi.

Within the state highway corridor, the Signs Bylaw requirements apply.

For signs visible from the state highway corridor, Waka Kotahi will continue to oppose consent applications where we consider there is a safety risk. Each of these applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Waka Kotahi will set out our concerns for the specific billboard in the submission. The types of factors Waka Kotahi will look at when deciding whether to submit on an application will include:

- Is it a high-speed environment?
- Are there other distractions in the immediate area (such as other billboards)?
- What is the dwell time at the location? • Does the roading infrastructure require attention from the driver (ie near intersections or pedestrian crossings)?
- Does the road have appropriate safety infrastructure?
- Are there unprotected users (pedestrians or cyclists) on or adjacent to the road?

Where we oppose an application, we will include our reasons in our submission.

7 Electoral advertising

There are specific requirements that apply to general election, referendum, and local government election signs in any location, as outlined below. As with all other types of third-party signs, lower speed environments (less than 70 km/hr) are strongly preferred for safety reasons. In all cases, any sign within the state highway corridor will require Waka Kotahi written approval and is subject to the Signs Bylaw (with some limitations for general elections).

The *SMO12 State Highway Control Manual – Part 16 (2017)* provides further guidance for managing electioneering signs on state highways.

7.1 General election sign guidance

The Electoral Act 1993 controls the form advertising may take and the period in which advertising is permitted and applies irrespective of the sign's location.

Electoral signs up to 3 m² in size must meet the *Electoral (Advertisements of a Specified Kind) Regulations 2005* (Electoral Regulations). The Electoral Regulations apply to any advertisement that encourages or persuades someone to vote for a registered political party or is used to promote or procure the election of a constituency candidate. The Electoral Regulations apply to the general election only (not local elections).

Signs subject to the Electoral Regulations are not required to meet the relevant district plan or local authority bylaw standards where these plan provisions or bylaw standards are inconsistent with the Electoral Regulations.

The Electoral Regulations and Electoral Act overrule the Signs Bylaw requirements with regard to electoral sign content or language. However, the Signs Bylaw remains applicable regarding the Bylaw's sign location requirements (as outlined in section 5 of the Bylaw)².

Electoral signs exceeding 3 m² in size are subject to the relevant district plan rules, all aspects of the Signs Bylaw and any relevant territorial authority bylaws.

Table 4 details the Electoral Regulations requirements for signs (including sandwich boards) located within the road reserve or visible from the road. These requirements only apply during the period beginning 9 weeks before polling day and ending with the close of the day before polling day.

Table 4 Electoral Regulations requirements for electoral signs up to 3 m²

Lettering size *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed limit less than 70 km/hr: At least 120 mm Speed limit 70 km/hr or more: 160 mm
Spacing *	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spacing between lines of text: at least 50 mm
Reflective materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signs must not be made of materials likely to reflect headlights from an approaching vehicle
Colour/layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must not be similar or the same as any traffic sign in shape and colour, and unlikely to be mistaken for a traffic sign or signal
Moving parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No moving parts, flashing or revolving mechanisms to attract attention permitted

**Lettering and spacing requirements do not apply to the lettering on any party logo that is registered by the Electoral Commission under the Electoral Act 1993, the promoter statement or an advertisement of a specified kind published in a poster form that is less than 1,500 cm² in size.*

7.2 Referendum sign guidance

Referendum signs are managed by the *Referendums Framework Act 2019*. Advertising is subject to the same timeframes as electoral advertisements, however, there are no standards to manage any of the sign content, location etc. The provisions of The *Electoral Act 1993* apply, as far as they are relevant to a referendum, "unless the provision is excluded or modified, expressly or impliedly, by a provision in, or

² Section 221B of the Electoral Act states that during the period 9 weeks before the election to 1 day before the polling day, advertisements of a specified kind (the electoral signs) are not subject to the prohibitions or restrictions in any other enactment or bylaw regarding the content or language used in an advertisement of a specified kind.

made under, this Act (*Referendums Framework Act 2019*).” The Electoral Act refers to advertisements of a specified kind – which does not include referendum advertising. Therefore, the location/content of referendum advertising is subject to the usual controls, i.e. the relevant district plan, any territorial authority bylaws, the Signs Bylaw, and Traffic Control Devices requirements.

7.3 Local government election sign guidance

For regional and local council elections, territorial authorities are responsible for regulating when, where and how election advertising is controlled. Council bylaws and district plan rules must be consistent with the controls on size and timing of displaying election advertising stipulated in the *Electoral Act 1993*.

All signs located within the state highway corridor are subject to the Signs Bylaw and will require Waka Kotahi approval. For signs on private land, local bylaws may apply. Part 3 of the TCD Manual can also be consulted for guidance where required.

8 Information to provide Waka Kotahi

Any party wishing to erect a sign on or visible from the state highway corridor will need to supply Waka Kotahi with the following information:

- A description of the proposed activity being advertised.
- A site diagram showing the sign’s location in relation to the state highway, property boundaries and property access.
- The property address and legal description of the property where the sign is to be placed.
- A diagram of the proposed sign showing the colours, dimensions and lettering height, and the height and width of the sign when mounted.
- A description of how the sign will be mounted (sandwich board, on a fence, on posts etc).

Information can be sent to the Waka Kotahi Environmental Planning Team at environmentalplanning@nzta.govt.nz

9 Summary of signs requirements

Location	Sign type	Requirements
On private property adjacent to state highways	General advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May require resource consent from territorial authority in which case Waka Kotahi may seek affected party status • Waka Kotahi will not support general advertising signs adjacent to state highways where the AADT is greater than 10,000 VPD and speeds are also greater than 70 km/h. • Signs restricted to one per site and should only relate to activities occurring on that site in speed zones above 70km/h • Subject to Section 3 All signs - Key Principles and TCD Manual requirements
	Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May require resource consent from territorial authority in which case Waka Kotahi may seek affected party status • Subject to Section 3 <i>All signs - Key Principles</i>
	General election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs up to 3 m² in size are subject to the Electoral Regulations • Signs larger than 3 m² subject to same requirements as general advertising signs • TCD Manual requirements relevant
	Referendum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlled under Referendum Framework Act 2019 • location/content of referendum advertising is subject to the relevant district plan and bylaw controls • May require resource consent from territorial authority in which case Waka Kotahi may seek affected party status • TCD Manual requirements relevant
	Local govt election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Territorial authorities responsible for regulating • Council bylaws and rules must be consistent with the controls on size and timing of displaying election advertising stipulated in the <i>Electoral Act 1993</i>
Within or over a motorway	All third-party signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibited under the Signs Bylaw
Within the state highway reserve area	General advertising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May require resource consent from territorial authority • No signs allowed in motorways or the state highway carriageway • Signs Bylaw applies • Signs discouraged in speed zones above 70km/h • Signs behind the kerb line of a state highway in speed environments of 50 km/hr or less are regulated by the relevant territorial authority • Signs subject to best design principles in Table 1 and TCD Manual requirements
	Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs Bylaw applies
	General election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electoral Regulations requirements and Signs Bylaw requirements (sign location related)

Location	Sign type	Requirements
	Referendum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per general advertising signs, the location/content of referendum advertising is subject to the relevant district plan, territorial authority bylaws, the Signs Bylaw, and Traffic Control Devices manual requirements
	Local govt election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signs Bylaw applies District plan rules and territorial authority bylaws apply TCD Manual requirements applicable

10 Reference documents

NZ Transport Agency (Signs on State Highways) Bylaw 2010
Traffic Control Devices Manual 2011 – Part 3 Advertising Signs
Traffic Control Devices Manual 2011 - Part 2 Direction, Service and General Guide Signs
NZTA P24:2020 Specification for Permanent Traffic Signs 2020 v2.1a
SMO12 State Highway Control Manual Part 16 – Consolidated Signs Sections 2017
Manual of traffic signs and markings (MOTSAM) Part 1: traffic signs