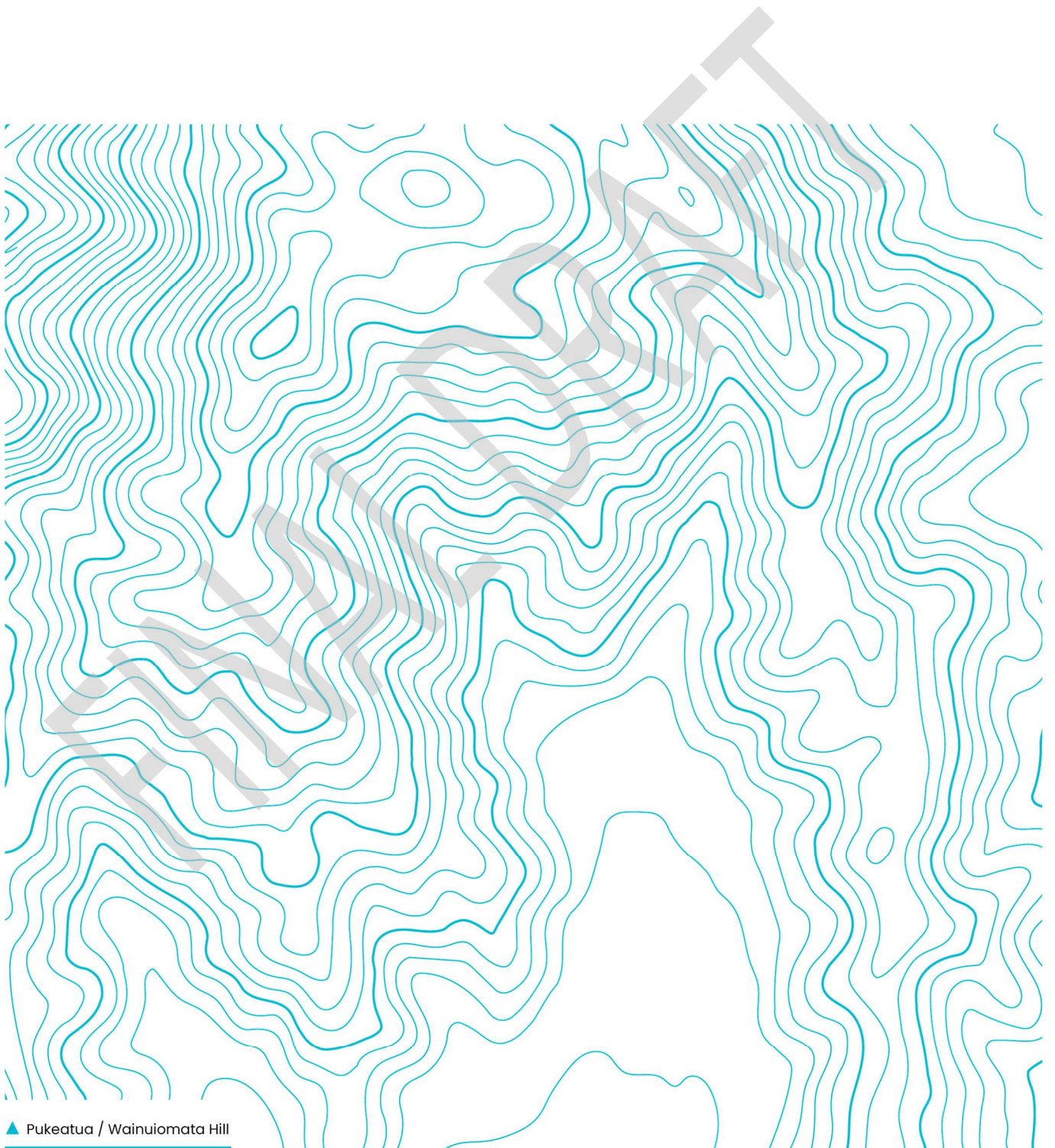


# Section 32 Evaluation SIGNS



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## 2 Overview and Purpose

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- (1) Hutt City Council is reviewing the City of Lower Hutt District Plan. This is a full review of the District Plan, including the approach to signs.
- (2) This report is a record of the review with regard to signs, and includes an evaluation of objectives and provisions for a proposed District Plan to address signs, in accordance with the requirements of s32 of the Resource Management Act 1991.
- (3) This report sits as one of a package of reports for the proposed Plan and should be read alongside the General report which covers matters common to all topics.

### **Signs and district plans**

- (4) Signs and associated advertising structures are an integral and necessary part of both urban and non-urban environments. Signs promote business, community facilities, and other activities, and are useful and necessary for wayfinding and safety.
- (5) Excessive or poorly controlled signage can adversely affect amenity values and cause issues with traffic and pedestrian safety. "Amenity values" refers to environmental characteristics of an area that contribute to the pleasantness and attractiveness of that area as a place to live, work or visit. Inherently, amenity values are subjective in nature, although there are qualities that are commonly accepted and shared by most people.
- (6) Signs can also impact the values of the site or structure on which they are located, particularly heritage values where the sign alters or obscures heritage features of the site/structure.
- (7) District plans often manage these potential impacts of signs, including through controls on the number, size and location of signs. These controls often vary by location, including more enabling controls for signs in commercial and industrial areas (where signs are both expected and necessary for promotion of business) and more constraining controls in locations where there is a greater potential for impacts on amenity values, safety of the transport network, and heritage values.

## 3 Statutory and Policy Context

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- (8) The following sections discuss the national, regional and local policy framework that are particularly relevant to the statutory and policy context for signs for the District Plan Review.
- (9) More information on how a district plan is to respond to national, regional and local planning documents is provided in the General report.

### 3.1 Resource Management Act 1991

#### 3.1.1 Section 5 – Purpose and Principles

- (10) The purpose of the District Plan (under section 72 of the RMA) is to assist Hutt City Council to carry out its functions in order to achieve the purpose of the Act.
- (11) The purpose of the RMA is set out in Section 5. The purpose is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.
- (12) Under s5(2) of the Act, sustainable management means:

*managing the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being and for their health and safety while—*

- (a) *sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and*
- (b) *safeguarding the life-supporting capacity of air, water, soil, and ecosystems; and*
- (c) *avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.*

- (13) The key aspects of this definition of sustainable management for signs are:
- Providing for social, economic and cultural well-being (signs are essential for promoting business, community facilities, and other activities that contribute to these well-beings),
  - Providing for health and safety, and
  - Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating any adverse effects of activities on the environment.

### 3.1.2 Section 6 – Matters of National Importance

- (14) Section 6 of the RMA sets out matters of national importance that all persons exercising functions and powers under the Act shall *recognise and provide for* in achieving the purpose of the RMA. The relevant s6 matters for signs are:

Section	Relevant Matter
6(b)	<i>The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.</i>
6(e)	<i>The relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, wahi tapu, and other taonga.</i>
6(f)	<i>The protection of historic heritage from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development.</i>

- (15) Signs may be located, or proposed to be located, within the areas described in s6(b), (e) and (f) of the RMA, and in some situations the signs and their installation may have impacts on the values of the areas.
- (16) However, signs may also have an operational or functional need to be located or partially located within these areas. This includes information signs, direction signs and hazard warnings.
- (17) For historic heritage (s6(f)), a heritage building or area may be commercial/industrial in nature, where signs for advertising, wayfinding,



and identification of businesses would be essential part of the functioning of the building/area (and may make a positive contribution to the heritage values).

### 3.1.3 Section 7 – Other Matters

- (18) Section 7 of the RMA sets out other matters that all persons exercising functions and powers under it shall *have particular regard to* in achieving the purpose of the RMA. The relevant s7 matters for signs are:

Section	Relevant Matter
7(c)	<p><i>The maintenance and enhancement of amenity values.</i></p> <p>Signs can impact amenity values, particularly visual amenity. Signs can also play a role in promoting and locating community facilities and events that contribute to amenity values.</p>
7(f)	<p><i>Maintenance and enhancement of the quality of the environment.</i></p>

### 3.1.4 Section 8 – Treaty of Waitangi

- (19) Section 8 of the RMA requires Council to take into account the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi when exercising functions and powers under the Act.
- (20) Council has engaged with Mana Whenua of Lower Hutt as part of the District Plan Review, including with representatives of Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika (Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust), Wellington Tenth Trust, Palmerston North Māori Reserve Trust, Te Rūnanganui o Te Āti Awa ki Te Upoko o Te Ika a Māui Incorporated and Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Incorporated.
- (21) This engagement has demonstrated two key principles of the treaty, the first being the principle of partnership by, recognising and fostering mutual good faith with our existing iwi partnerships and continuing to

provide the opportunities for tangata whenua to input meaningfully into the design of the sign chapter.

- (22) Secondly, the principle of active protection is another key aspect of the treaty principles demonstrated, as it seeks ways to deliver mixed and culturally dynamic communities in a sustainable way.

### **3.1.5 Section 31 – Functions of territorial authorities**

- (23) Section 31 of the RMA sets functions of territorial authorities for the purpose of giving effect to the Act.
- (24) While s31 does not specifically mention signs, it sets a general function of the control of any actual or potential effects of the use, development, or protection of land (s31(1)(b)).

## **3.2 National policy statements and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement**

- (25) The District Plan must give effect to national policy statements (s75(3)(a) of the RMA) and the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement (s75(3)(b)).
- (26) No national policy statements or the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement directly address signs. However:
- The National Policy Statement on Urban Development includes general directions on providing for urban land use and development in general, which can include signs,
  - The New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement includes general directions in relation to the coastal environment, including on enabling land use and development while managing impacts on the coastal environment (including natural character, open space, public access, amenity and heritage values).

## **3.3 National environmental standards**

- (27) National environmental standards are regulations prepared under the RMA that prescribe technical standards, methods (including rules) and requirements. A district plan can only be more lenient or stringent than a



relevant national environmental standard if the standard expressly says that this may be the case.

- (28) The National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission Activities 2009 include regulations for signs on and next to support structures of existing transmission lines that identify the structure or its owner, or help with safety or navigation (Regulations 23 and 24).

### **3.4 National Planning Standards**

- (29) The District Plan must give effect to the National Planning Standards (s75(3)(ba) of the Act).
- (30) The National Planning Standards require that provisions that manage signs be included in the Signs chapter in Part 2 – District-Wide Matters of the District Plan.
- (31) The National Planning Standards include definitions for “sign” and “official sign” that must be used by district plans that include those terms.

### **3.5 Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region**

- (32) Section 75(3)(c) of the RMA requires the District Plan to give effect to the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region (‘the RPS’). The RPS identifies the significant resource management issues for the region and outlines the policies and methods required to achieve the integrated sustainable management of the region’s natural and physical resources.
- (33) In addition, section 74(2) of the RMA requires Council to have regard to any proposed regional policy statements. Greater Wellington Regional Council notified Proposed RPS Change 1 on 18 August 2022, and notified its decisions on the proposed change in September 2024. As of the preparation of the proposed District Plan, Proposed RPS Change 1 is subject to appeal.
- (34) No objectives or policies in either the RPS or Proposed RPS Change 1 directly address signs. However, the operative RPS includes general

objectives or policies on a range of issues that may be relevant for sites or structures for signs, depending on the site. This includes:

- Objectives 4 and Policies 3, 22, 26, 28 and 35, on the natural character of the coastal environment.
- Objective 15 and Policy 22, on historic heritage.
- Objective 17 and Policies 24 and 26, on outstanding natural features and landscapes.
- Objective 18 and Policies 26 and 28, on special amenity landscapes.

(35) These objectives and policies are listed in full in Appendix 1 of this report. The proposed Regional Policy statement does not contain any changes that affect potential provisions for signs.

(36) The approach of the proposed District Plan in relation to these objectives and policies are discussed in the s32 evaluation reports on those topics.

### **3.5.1 Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region**

(37) Under Section 75(4)(b) of the RMA, the District Plan must not be inconsistent with the Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region for any matter specified in section 30(1) of the RMA (which relates to functions of regional councils).

(38) Under Section 74(2)(a)(ii) of the RMA, Council is to have regard to any proposed regional plan in regard to any matter of regional significance or for which the regional council has primary responsibility. This includes Proposed NRP Change 1, which was notified on 30 October 2023.

(39) No relevant matters in the Natural Resources Plan for the Wellington Region or Proposed NRP Change 1 are relevant to signs.

## **3.6 Iwi management plans**

(40) Section 74(2A) requires territorial authorities, when preparing or changing a district plan, to take into account any relevant planning document recognised by an iwi authority and lodged with the territorial authority, to the extent that its content has a bearing on the resource management issues of the district.

(41) No Iwi management plans have been lodged with Hutt City Council.

### 3.7 Hutt City Council plans, policies, and strategies

(42) The following Hutt City Council plans, policies and strategies address specific aspects of signs:

Plan/Policy/Strategy	Comment
Parks and Reserves Bylaw 2017	Requires written approval from Council before erecting signs on Council reserves.
Public Places Bylaw 2016	Requires written approval from Council before erecting signs in public places.  Requires that 2.4m is maintained between signs placed under verandas in public places and the footpath below.
Hutt City Council Traffic Bylaw 2017	Controls advertising on the road where they may cause a safety hazard or obstruct view, unless authorised by Council.
Reserve and recreation plans and strategies	Council has a range of reserve and recreation plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reserves Strategic directions 2016–2026,</li><li>• Reserve management plans,</li><li>• Go Outside and Play: Making our City an even better place to play, and</li><li>• Leisure and Wellbeing Strategy 2012–2032.</li></ul> These plans and strategies include objectives and policies on signs, in relation to the

	provision of signs that promote safety and provide information and/or directions.
Children and children and young people's plan 2012-2022	Recognises the need for multi-lingual signage on new and redeveloped Council facilities.

### 3.8 District plans of adjacent territorial authorities

- (43) In preparing its District Plan, Council needs to have regard to the extent to which the Plan needs to be consistent with the plans or proposed plans of adjacent territorial authorities.
- (44) For signs, the cross-boundary issues are minimal. A sign in Lower Hutt near the territorial boundary could have an impact on areas on the adjoining territory, but these impacts would be very localised.
- (45) The main value in consistency with the plans of adjacent territorial authorities would be reliability and ease of use for people who undertake land use and development throughout the region.
- (46) A summary of the range of approaches in other district plans in the Wellington region (for the purpose of identifying issues and options for the proposed Signs chapter) is provided in the Resource Management Issues section of this report.

### 3.9 Other statutory and non-statutory plans, policies, and strategies

- (47) The following other non-statutory documents are relevant for signs:

Plan, Policy, or Strategy	Comments
NZTA Traffic Control Devices Manual	The Traffic Control Devices Manual (TCD Manual) provides guidance on industry best practice for signage on roads. As of the

	<p>development of the proposed District Plan, parts of this manual are still being developed.</p> <p>The TCD Manual gives effect to the rules made under the Land Transport Act 1998. It also supports NZ standards and roading authorities' codes of practice.</p> <p>As of 9 May 2024, the TCD Manual contains 14 sections, and includes documents on:</p> <p>Sign specifications for traffic signs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General requirements for signs</li> <li>• Direction service and general service signage</li> <li>• Advertising signs</li> <li>• Sign templates and designs</li> </ul> <p>A number of documents are yet to be developed. This includes digital billboard guidance.</p>
<p>NZTA Manual of Traffic Signs and Marking</p>	<p>This manual sets out the policy and location requirements for traffic signs. Details are given for approved sign legends, approved sign symbols and sign layouts generally. Guidance is also given on sign size selection and the location / positioning of signs. This manual is set to be replaced by the TCD manual when completed.</p>

## 3.10 Other legislation or regulations

(48) In addition to the RMA, other legislation and regulations can be relevant considerations for a district plan, particularly where management of an issue is addressed through multiple pieces of legislation and regulatory bodies.

(49) The following other legislation and regulations address signs:

Act or Regulation	Comments
Land Transport Act 1998 (LTA)	Provides for road controlling agencies to make rules for signs, including signs on vehicles, on roadways.
NZTA (Signs on State Highways) Bylaw 2010	Sets requirements for signs on or over any State Highway under the LTA
Railways Act 2005	The Railways Act provides powers to rail operators to require the owner or occupier to remove signs from a site where it could be mistaken for or obscure a railway signal to remove the structure.
Building Act 2004	<p>The Building Act regulates building work, including through performance standards for buildings.</p> <p>Schedule 1 of the Act lists building work that is exempt from building consent requirements, including building work in connection with a sign (whether free-standing or attached to a structure) and any structural support of the sign if:</p> <p>(a) no face of the sign exceeds 6 square metres in surface area; and</p>



	(b) the top of the sign does not exceed 3 metres in height above the supporting ground level.
Electoral Act 1993	The Electoral Act sets the timeframe for when electoral signs can be erected and size requirements (s221B).
Electoral (Advertisements of a Specified Kind) Regulations 2005	Contains regulations that control the type and content of electoral signs.
Health and Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2017	The Health and Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2017 contain requirements for signage relating to certain hazardous substances.

# 4 Resource management issues

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## 4.1 Introduction to Resource Management Issues

- (50) This section discusses the resource management issues for signs in Lower Hutt, and includes a summary of the evidence base that has informed the identification of resource management issues for the District Plan Review.
- (51) The management of signs has long been the domain of district plans. The City of Lower Hutt District Plan has included a Signs chapter since the Plan was first proposed in 1995.
- (52) That chapter became operative in 2003 (along with the vast majority of the District Plan) and has not been reviewed since (although some plan changes have resulted in consequential amendments to the Signs chapter, such as updating references to zone names). As a result, the District Plan Review has been the first thorough review of the Plan's approach to signs since 2003.
- (53) For the District Plan Review, the determination of resource management issues for signs, and the options for addressing those issues, has involved:
- A review of the statutory and strategic context for signs (outlined in Section 3 of this report),
  - A review of the existing approach of the District Plan,
  - A review of information on recent resource consents and compliance issues for signs,
  - A review of the approaches of other district plans, and
  - Engagement with Mana Whenua, the community and other stakeholders (including engagement on a draft District Plan).

## 4.2 Evidence base

### 4.2.1 Existing approach of City of Lower Hutt District Plan

- (54) The operative District Plan primarily address signs in a dedicated Signs chapter (Chapter 14B).
- (55) The Signs chapter includes four objectives. The objectives seek outcomes in relation to:
- Providing for signs while managing effects on visual amenity of the surrounding area (14B 1.1),
  - Ensuring that signs do not interfere with the safety and efficiency of the transport network (14B 1.2),
  - Ensuring that signs do not adversely affect adversely the visual amenity values and sense of place associated with the main entrance routes to the city (14B 1.3), and
  - Ensuring that temporary signs do not adversely affect visual amenity values or traffic safety (14B 1.4).
- (56) The policies and rules of the Signs chapter implement these objectives by:
- *In general*, permitting signs subject to standards on:
    - Sign location (controlling roof-top signs and signs need to relate to an activity on the site),
    - Size of signs (maximum height and face area),
    - Temporary signs,
    - Illumination (including flashing and light spill), and
    - Movement (including inflated signs).
  - Where standards are not met, requiring resource consent as a controlled, restricted discretionary, discretionary or non-complying activity, depending on the standard(s) not met.
- (57) Permitted activity standards vary by zone, with more permissive standards in commercial and business activity areas and the Community Health Activity Area.

(58) In addition to zone-specific provisions, there are the following additional area-specific provisions:

- *For sites within 50m of state highways, permitted activity standards are more restrictive in commercial and business activity areas, and resource consent is always required in recreation and rural activity areas.*
- *For the Petone Commercial Activity Area – Area 1 (an area along Jackson Street, Petone), all signs require resource consent as a restricted discretionary activity.*
- *For commercial and business activity areas, signs facing residential, rural and recreation activity areas, or facing specified roads require resource consent for a controlled activity.*
- *For the Tertiary Education Precinct (an area that provides for the Weltec tertiary education facility), signs require resource consent where the site abuts a residential activity area and the sign faces the boundary with the residential activity area.*

(59) There are also specific resource consent requirements for signs advertising brothels and commercial sexual services.

(60) In addition to the Signs chapter, the operative District Plan also addresses signs through the following chapters:

- *Chapter 5B: Petone Commercial Activity Area, which includes a restricted discretionary activity rule for signs in the Petone Commercial Activity Area – Area 1 (along Jackson Street),*
- *Chapters 6B Special Business Activity Area and 14D: Hazardous Facilities, which include permitted activity standards on warning signs for hazardous facilities,*
- *Chapter 6D: Extraction Activity Area, which includes a permitted activity standards to control impacts of signs on amenity values, and*
- *Chapter 13: Network Utilities, which includes a matter of discretion relating to impacts on traffic and pedestrian safety, including in relation to visibility of traffic signs.*
- *Chapter 14F Heritage Buildings and Structures, which requires a resource consent for any alteration visible from the road frontage to any building or structure listed in Appendix Heritage 1, 2 or 3.*

## 4.2.2 Review of recent resource consent information

- (61) Records of resource consent applications and compliance issues from between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2023 have been reviewed to determine consenting and compliance related issues for signs. A total of 127 resource consents for signage were received for this period.
- (62) The largest number of consent applications were for signs in residential activity areas. Resource consents were also granted for signs in commercial, business and recreation activity areas.
- (63) The majority of resource consents were for discretionary activities, where a permitted activity standard was not met. The most common standards breached were the maximum face area and maximum height of signs. This includes real estate advertising signs associated with larger multi-unit developments.
- (64) Other issues highlighted by resource consents issued, include:
- Cross boundary effects from signs in commercial and business activity areas facing residential, rural and recreation activity areas.
  - Potential effects on heritage values associated with Petone Commercial (Area 1) Activity Area.
  - Potential traffic safety effects from signs erected close to state Highway 2 or vulnerable roads in Hutt City.
  - There are few consents for digital signs. Digital signs are not automatically required to obtain resource consent by standards that relate to the digital display. This is highlighted by the certificates of compliance that have been issued for digital signs.

## 4.2.3 Complaints about signs

- (65) Complaints received by Council between 1 January 2014 and 31 December 2023 in relation to signs have been reviewed.
- (66) Most complaints relate to real estate signage, trailers with signs parked in road reserve and election signage. There is insufficient information to determine what sign related rules may have been breached.
- (67) The majority of complaints were made in Petone. The data collected doesn't provide for identification of the underlying activity area.

## 4.2.4 Analysis of other District Plans

- (68) The approaches of other district plans of the Wellington region for signs have been reviewed. Specifically:
- The operative Kāpiti Coast District Plan 2021,
  - Proposed Porirua District Plan (proposed 2020, decisions released 2023),
  - Proposed Wairarapa Combined District Plan (proposed 2023),
  - Proposed Wellington District Plan (proposed 2022, some decisions released in 2023), and
  - The operative Upper Hutt District Plan 2004.
- (69) The review of these district plans revealed both commonalities in their treatment of signs and also differences.
- (70) Most of the district plans contain a single objective on providing for signs whilst seeking to maintain character and amenity values, and ensuring the safe operation of the transport network. The operative Kāpiti Coast District Plan differs in that objectives are set at a more strategic district level. In their case it means giving effect to 7 objectives.
- (71) The district plans reviewed use between five and eight policies to manage signs. In general, they cover:
- Provision of official signs,
  - Provision for temporary signs,
  - Management of the effects of illumination and digital signs,
  - Protection of historic heritage values associated with heritage buildings, heritage structures and heritage areas, and
  - Ensuring the safety of the transport network.
- (72) There is a large variation in the exact layout of the rules and standards and the resulting complexity of the regulations. The operative Kāpiti Coast District Plan and Upper Hutt District Plan have the standards embedded in the rules. The other district plans separate the rules and standards into separate sections. *Note: The Kāpiti Coast and Upper Hutt District Plans were both developed before the National Planning Standards took effect.*



*As a result, those councils restructured their plans to comply with the National Planning Standards retroactively. This would have influenced the structure and format of the Signs chapters of those plans.*

- (73) The district plans reviewed use permitted activities and permitted activity standards to provide a permitted baseline for the volume and intensity of signage on most sites. Permitted activity standards usually list the maximum number of signs maximum face area, maximum height. These may relate to free standing signs, signs on verandahs and signs attached to buildings. Standards generally vary by zone, being more permissive in industrial and commercial zones, and most restrictive in residential zones.
- (74) The district plans contain rules and standards relating to the protection of historic heritage. The approach being relatively restrictive permitted activity standards (e.g. Wellington District Plan) or the requirement for a resource consent (e.g. Proposed Wairarapa District Plan).
- (75) All the district plans include provisions to ensure the safe operation of the transport network. These rules in standards include minimum permitted activity standards relating to obstruction of road signs, signals and intersections, design that is similar to traffic signs, illumination, location, and content.
- (76) All district plans contained rules and standards relating to illumination and digital signs. In general luminescence is controlled via standards, whilst all digital signs require a resource consent.

#### **4.2.5 Advice from mana whenua**

- (77) Council has engaged with mana whenua on the district plan review through the Kāhui Mana Whenua engagement group. No specific issues have been raised with regard to signs.

#### **4.2.6 Stakeholder and community engagement**

- (78) Council has primarily engaged with the community and other stakeholders through two rounds of engagement:
- The *Shaping Your City* engagement (2020), on issues and options for the District Plan Review, and

- The *Draft District Plan* engagement (2023), on a full draft of the plan that had been developed through the District Plan Review.

(79) In addition, for some topics there has been ongoing engagement with people who have expressed a particular interest in that topic.

(80) Main themes of the feedback received regarding signs were:

- Requests for greater restrictions on the size of both stand-alone and building-mounted signs.
- Requests for more permissive rules for signs at the site of the Hutt Hospital.
- Requests for more restrictive controls on election signs, including some feedback from the community objecting to election signs in general.
- The need to maintain the current level of control for digital signs (there is some community opposition to digital advertising signs due to their size and effect on character, amenity and traffic safety).
- Requests for control on real estate signs. Some concern was raised about the proliferation of real estate signs.
- Requests for fewer restrictions on signs on heritage buildings, with the request that the restrictions focus on size and location of signs and protection of architectural features.
- Requests for changes relating to visual clutter, illumination, display times for digital signs, traffic safety, restrictions of digital advertising on significant holidays, the activity status for digital signs that breach standards,
- Heritage New Zealand provided feedback on the Draft District Plan. They support the provisions for protection of historic heritage from the adverse effects of signs.

### 4.3 Summary of issues analysis

(81) The following resource management issues have been identified for signs, based on the discussion above and the statutory and policy context outlined in Section 3 of this report:

### **4.3.1 Providing for signs**

(82) Signs perform an important economic and social role. There is a need to provide official signs relating to transport management, health and safety and information. In addition, they have an important economic role advertising businesses, and there is a social benefit related to election signage and community events.

### **4.3.2 Impacts of signs**

(83) Signs can have adverse effects on:

- Amenity values and character,
- Historic heritage, and
- The safe operation of the transport network.

(84) The adverse effects of signs on amenity values and character are an issue that has been highlighted through consultation, complaints and analysis of resource consents, including the effects of temporary signs related to real estate advertising, development and elections.

(85) For historic heritage, signs have the potential to detract from architectural features and historical value.

(86) Signs have potential adverse effect on the safe operation transport network, including through obstruction of sight lines and distraction of drivers.

### **4.3.3 Emergence of illuminated, digital and moving signs**

(87) The issue of the effects of digital advertising signs has grown since the District Plan became operative. These signs are highly visible, produce light, include variable images and are often located adjacent to key transport routes. The key adverse effects relate to amenity, character and the safe operation of the transport network.

# 5 Scale and significance assessment

(88) This evaluation report must provide a level of detail that corresponds to the scale and significance of the environmental, economic, social, and cultural effects anticipated from the implementation of the proposal.

(89) In assessing that scale and significance we have had regard to the following:

<b>Matters of national importance</b>	Moderate. Signs have the potential to impact matters of national importance listed in s6 of the RMA, particularly in relation to natural features and landscapes, the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu, and other taonga, and historic heritage.
<b>Other matters</b>	Moderate. Signs have the potential to impact amenity values and the quality of the environment in general.
<b>Degree of change from the operative plan</b>	Low. The approach of the proposed District Plan for signs is similar to that of the operative District Plan.
<b>Geographic scale of effects</b>	Low. While signs can be located throughout the district, any one sign is likely to impact a relatively small area.
<b>Number of people affected</b>	Moderate. Signs have an impact on all people (impacts that can be both positive and negative), although the

	impact of any one sign is likely to impact a smaller portion of the population.
<b>Duration of effects</b>	Moderate. Effects associated with the <i>installation</i> of a sign are likely to be short-lived. However, <i>ongoing</i> effects (such as positive effects from promotion of businesses, effects on the transport and effects on amenity) continue as long as the sign is in place.
<b>Economic impacts</b>	Moderate. The economic impacts of signs are largely positive. Adverse effects are minimal.
<b>Social and cultural impacts</b>	Moderate. Signs can adversely affect the amenity values, cultural values and character of an area. However, they are also important for advertising and identifying facilities that contribute to social and cultural wellbeing, such as community facilities and parks.
<b>Environmental impacts</b>	Low. While signs have the potential to have environmental effects, the effects are typically small in scale.
<b>Health and safety impacts</b>	Moderate. Signs have the potential to have both positive effects (through warning and instructional signs) and negative effects (as a distraction or obscuring a hazard) on safety.
<b>Degree of interest from mana whenua</b>	Moderate. Mana Whenua have expressed an interest in the regulation of signs within sites and areas of significance to them.

<b>Degree of interest from the public</b>	Low. There has been little interest in this topic during community and stakeholder engagement.
<b>Degree of risk or uncertainty</b>	Low. The effects of signs are well understood.

- (90) Overall scale and significance of the effects of signs are **low**, primarily due to the relatively low small scale of effects (particularly when compared to other topics of the District Plan Review) and low degree of changes from the operative District Plan.



# 6 Proposed District Plan objectives and provisions

(91) The following table gives the objectives of the proposed Signs chapter, with a summary of the policies and rules that implement each objective:

Objective	Text and associated provisions
SIGN-01	<p><i>“Signs support the needs of the community to advertise and inform while the effects on local amenity and the transport network are effectively managed.”</i></p> <p>Implemented through:</p> <p><b><u>Six policies</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIGN-P1 Signs provided for</li> <li>• SIGN-P2 Temporary signs, including election signs</li> <li>• SIGN-P3 Third-party advertising signs</li> <li>• SIGN-P4 Digital and illuminated signs</li> <li>• SIGN-P5 Signs on heritage buildings or heritage structures or in heritage areas</li> <li>• SIGN-P6 Impacts of signs on the transport network</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Four rules</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIGN-R1 Signs</li> <li>• SIGN-R2 Third-party advertising signs</li> <li>• SIGN-R3 Digital signs</li> <li>• SIGN-R4 Signs on sites with scheduled heritage buildings, heritage structures, or sites within a heritage area</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Nine standards</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIGN-S1 Area of sign</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIGN-S2 Combined are of signs per site</li> <li>• SIGN-S3 Number of signs per site</li> <li>• SIGN-S4 Height of freestanding signs</li> <li>• SIGN-S5 Height and placement of signs attached to buildings, structures and verandahs</li> <li>• SIGN-S6 Temporary signs</li> <li>• SIGN-S7 Election signs</li> <li>• SIGN-S8 Signs and the transport network</li> <li>• SGN-S9 Sign illumination</li> </ul>
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(92) The provisions of the signs chapter needs to be considered along with the objectives the zone heritage and transport chapters.

(93) The proposed provisions in the Signs chapter give effect to objectives that manage amenity and character in specific areas. Each of the zone chapters in the proposed District Plan contains an objective on the amenity and character of the zone. These objectives identify a range of outcomes that vary by zone and are reflected in the variation in the permitted activity standards for each zone.

(94) The provisions in the proposed Signs chapter give effect to the objective in the Historical Heritage chapter that seeks to protect recognised historic heritage. The signs chapter provides a specific policy rule and standards for signs on heritage buildings, structures and areas.

(95) The provisions in the Signs chapter are consistent with the objectives of the Infrastructure chapter, particularly in relation to providing for official signs and managing the adverse effects of signs on the safe operation of the transport network.

# 7 Evaluation of objectives

- (96) This section is the evaluation of objectives, as required through s32(1)(a) of the RMA.
- (97) An objective is a statement of what is to be achieved through the resolution of a particular resource management issue. A district plan objective should set out a desired end state to be achieved through the implementation of policies and rules.
- (98) Under s75(1)(a) of the Resource Management Act, a district plan must state the objectives for the district.
- (99) Under s32(1)(a) of the Resource Management Act, an evaluation report required under the Act must examine the extent to which the objectives of the proposal being evaluated are the most appropriate way to achieve the purpose of the RMA. The purpose of the RMA, as stated in s5(1) of the Act, is to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.

## Evaluation of Objectives

### **SIGN 01 – Signs**

*Signs support the needs of the community to advertise and inform while the effects on local character, amenity, heritage values, and the safety of the transport network are effectively managed.*

### **Relevance**

- Addresses the identified resource management issues.
- Acknowledges the positive contribution of signs while recognising adverse effects on transport safety, character, amenity values and heritage values need to be managed.

### **Usefulness**

- Clearly states outcomes sought for signs and their potential impacts, with support of other objectives of the proposed District Plan on the character and amenity values of each zone.
- Supports the Council function of controlling the actual and potential effects of signs (a function under s31(1)(b) of the RMA).

### **Reasonableness**

- Seeks an outcome that is reasonable for people who operate under the Plan to meet.

- Is consistent with outcomes sought in the operative District Plan and other district plans in the Wellington region.

#### **Achievability**

- Can be achieved without imposing a significant regulatory burden on people undertaking land use and development under the District Plan (although the policies and rules that implement the objective would have a greater influence on this).

#### **Alternatives**

- **No objectives for signs**

If there was no objective in the Signs chapter and the policies and rules for signs were retained, the lack of a specific objective on signs would mean that the Plan would effectively rely on more generic objectives (such as objectives in zone chapters on amenity values, and objectives in the Transport and Infrastructure chapters on transport safety) to set the outcomes for signs.

This alternative is not proposed as it would create uncertainty for plan users on what potential impacts from signs the District Plan manages.

Alternatively, having no objectives for signs could result in the District Plan not having policies and rules to address the impacts of signs (as there would be no clear objective to implement), which would create a risk of impacts on local character, amenity, heritage values and safety of the transport network.

- **More detailed objectives for the Signs chapter**

This alternative would result in multiple objectives for the Signs chapter, with each objective seeking a more specific outcome in relation to the aspects of the environment that are being managed (such as local character, amenity, heritage values, and the transport network).

This alternative is not proposed as the more specific outcomes sought in relation to local character, amenity, heritage values and the transport network are already specified elsewhere in the Plan, and as a result, the more detailed objectives would not be useful.

#### **Summary**

*Objective SIGN-01* sets a clear outcome that signs are provided for while managing the effects of signs, and is clear on which effects are managed in relation to signs. It would enable Council to undertake its regulatory functions to control the actual and potential impacts of land use and development in a way that is not overly prescriptive and would not impose a significant regulatory burden on people undertaking land use and development under the District Plan (although the policies and rules that implement the objective would have a greater influence on this).

# 8 Evaluation of Policies and Rules

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- (100) Policies and rules implement, or give effect to, the objectives of a plan.
- (101) Policies of a district plan are the course of action to achieve or implement the plan's objective (i.e. the path to be followed to achieve a certain, specified, environmental outcome). Rules of a district plan implement the plan's policies, and have the force and effect of a regulation.
- (102) Under s32(1)(b) of the Resource Management Act, an evaluation report required under the Act must examine whether the provisions in the proposal are the most appropriate way to achieve the objectives by—
- (i) *identifying other reasonably practicable options for achieving the objectives; and*
  - (ii) *assessing the efficiency and effectiveness of the provisions in achieving the objectives; and*
  - (iii) *summarising the reasons for deciding on the provisions.*
- (103) Under s32(2) of the Resource Management Act, the assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the provisions must:
- (a) *identify and assess the benefits and costs of the environmental, economic, social, and cultural effects that are anticipated from the implementation of the provisions, including the opportunities for—*
    - (i) *economic growth that are anticipated to be provided or reduced; and*
    - (ii) *employment that are anticipated to be provided or reduced; and*
  - (b) *if practicable, quantify the benefits and costs referred to in paragraph (a); and*

- (c) *assess the risk of acting or not acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information about the subject matter of the provisions.*

## **Structure of this evaluation**

- (104) The proposed Signs chapter includes six policies that implement the single objective of the chapter (evaluated above). These policies are then implemented by a range of rules and standards, with some rules and standards playing a role in implementing multiple policies.
- (105) For this evaluation, the following evaluation tables have been prepared:
- An evaluation of provisions for signs in general (section 8.1),
  - Evaluations for provisions specific to:
    - Temporary signs and election signs (section 8.2),
    - Third-party signs (section 8.3),
    - Digital signs (section 8.4),
    - Signs in relation to historic heritage (section 8.5), and
    - Signs in relation to the transport network (section 8.6).

## **Quantification of benefits and costs**

- (106) Under Section 32(2)(b), the benefits and costs assessed should be quantified if practicable.
- (107) Given the high number of signs within the city, and the wide variety of the type, design and locations of signs, the quantification of benefits and costs is not practicable.

## **Risk of acting / not acting if information is uncertain or insufficient**

- (108) Under Section 32(2)(c) the assessment of efficiency and effectiveness of provisions must include an assessment of the risk of acting or not acting if there is uncertain or insufficient information about the subject matter of the provisions.
- (109) For the Signs chapter, information on the management of signs is certain and sufficient. It is a subject matter that has long been addressed by the District Plan and Council and its effects are well understood (although vary greatly depending on the type, design and location of a sign).

(110) The proposed provisions have been consulted on with the public and key stakeholders and have been refined to address key issues raised during consultation. The proposed approach is generally supported by the community.

## 8.1 Evaluation of provisions for signs in general

<p><b>SIGN-P1 Signs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-R1 Signs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S1 Area of sign</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S2 Combined area of signs per site</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S3 Number of signs per site</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S4 height of free standing signs</b></p>	<p><b>SIGN-S5 Height and placement of signs attached to buildings, structures and verandahs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S6 Temporary signs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S7 Election signs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S8 Signs and the transport network</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S9 Sign illumination</b></p>
<p><b>Why these provisions are included in the proposed District Plan</b></p>	
<p>SIGN-P1 and SIGN-R1 ensure that signs are provided for in the district as a permitted activity subject to standards SIGN-S1 to S9.</p>	
<p><b>Efficiency and effectiveness</b></p>	
<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The policy and rule provide for a wide range of signs, which enables a wide range of economic, social and cultural benefits, depending on what is being advertised on the sign.</li> <li>• The policy sets requirements for managing effects on character, amenity values, historic heritage values and safety of the transport network, enabling benefits for these aspects of the environment.</li> <li>• Signs provided for by the policy and rule can assist in economic growth by supporting businesses through advertising. This can assist with economic growth and employment (albeit to a small extent).</li> </ul> <p><b>Costs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for signs to have a negative impact on the environment, including impacts on character, amenity values, historic heritage and safety of the transport network, although scale of the effect from any one sign is likely to be minimal.</li> <li>• The policy would constrain signs in some situations, which could have an economic impact in some situations by limiting advertising opportunities. This</li> </ul>	

could constrain economic growth and employment in some situations (albeit to a small extent).

- Resource consent would be required for some signs, which brings consenting costs for people proposing those signs.

#### **Overall assessment**

Effectiveness is relatively high as the provisions provide for the benefit of signs, particularly for health and safety, although there is a trade-off with official signs potentially having an adverse effect.

Efficiency is high given signs are enabled in a way that does not incur consenting costs for all signage.

#### **Reasonably practicable alternative**

- **Provisions for signs that require resource consent**

Under this alternative, all signs would require resource consent.

This option is less efficient at providing for signs than the proposed option as resource consent would be required for all signs. However, this approach would allow for the specific effects of all signs to be assessed through the resource consent process.

Overall, the effects produced by small signs does not justify requiring all signs requiring a resource consent.

## **8.2 Evaluation of specific provisions for temporary and election signs**

### **SIGN-P2 Temporary signs, including election signs**

### **SIGN-R1 Signs**

### **SIGN-S6 Temporary signs**

### **SIGN-S7 Election signs**

#### **Why these provisions are included in the proposed District Plan**

SIGN-P2, SIGN-R1, SIGN-S6 and SIGN-S7 ensure that temporary signs and election are provided for. Temporary and election signs are an important tool for the community. The provisions provide for temporary signs and election signs, but limit the effects including through standards on the duration that a sign can be in place as a permitted activity.



The policy and rule are supported by a definition of temporary signs which is defined as *an advertising sign erected for a short period of time for the purpose of:*

- *advising of a forthcoming community event, occasion or service which is primarily a not-for-profit, event, organisation or service;*
- *advertising a forthcoming temporary activity;*
- *identifying a construction site or a development under construction;*
- *Electioneering (Election signs); or*
- *The sale, lease, rent or auction of land (real estate signs).*

## **Efficiency and effectiveness**

### **Benefits**

- Provides for the economic benefits for commercial activities that use temporary signs.
- Provides for social benefit when associated with elections and community events.
- Provides for a health and safety benefit when associated with construction sites.
- Some mitigation of the adverse effects are provided by permitted activity standards. These set a limit to the number, size and location of temporary signs and the duration they can be displayed for without a resource consent.
- Provides for consideration of costs and benefits of individual signs through the resource consenting process.

### **Costs**

- Potential for temporary signs to have a negative impact on the environment, including impacts on character, amenity values, historic heritage and safety of the transport network, although scale of the effect from any one sign is likely to be minimal and any adverse effects on character, amenity, historic heritage values and the safety of the roading network are partially mitigated by their temporary nature.

### **Overall assessment**

Effectiveness and efficiency are relatively high as the provisions provide for the benefit of temporary signs informing the public about activities such as elections, house sales, local events and construction sites. There is a trade-off with official signs potentially having an adverse effect, although this is partially mitigated through the temporary nature of the effects and the standards for permitted activities.

## **Reasonably practicable alternative**

### **Standards that allow for of temporary signs**

Under this alternative, the standards for permitted temporary signs would be less stringent. This would allow larger, higher, and/or more temporary signs, as

well as less control over the location of signs and the duration they are displayed.

This option is more efficient and has social and economic benefits through being more enabling of temporary signs. However, this is more than offset by the environmental costs associated with loss of amenity and character.

- **Provisions requiring resource consents for most temporary signs**

Under this alternative more signs would require resource consent as the permitted maximum face area, number of signs, maximum height, duration of display is reduced.

This option has environmental benefits, in that it more tightly regulates the effects of signs, but is traded off against the economic and social costs associated with requiring resource consent for these signs.

## 8.3 Evaluation of specific provisions for third-party signs

### **SIGN-P3 Third-party advertising signs**

### **SIGN-R2 Third-party advertising signs**

#### **Why these provisions are included in the proposed District Plan**

SIGN-P3 and SIGN-R2 ensure the effects of third-party signs are largely limited to areas where third-party zones are most likely to occur and where they are in keeping with the character of the areas (including industrial and commercial zones, the Sport and Active Recreation Zone, and Special Purpose Zones) by permitting third-party advertising signs in these areas and requiring resource consent in all others

The policy and rule are supported by a definition of third-party signs (*Means a sign that promotes:*

1. *goods that are not sold on the site the sign is located on,*
2. *services that are not provided on the site the sign is located on, or*
3. *events that are not held on the site the sign is located on.*)

#### **Efficiency and effectiveness**

##### **Benefits**

- Provides for economic benefit associated with third-party commercial advertising third-party signs in commercial and industrial zones.

- Limits the environmental effects on amenity and character associated with proliferation of third-party signs in residential, rural and recreation zones by requiring resource consent in these locations.

#### **Costs**

- Potential for third-party signs to have a negative impact on the environment, including impacts on character and, amenity values, although scale of the effect from any one sign is likely to be minimal, and other rules

#### **Overall assessment**

Effectiveness is relatively high as the provisions provide for third-party signs in industrial and commercial zones whilst restricting the use of such signs elsewhere. This provides for efficiency use of signs in these areas while being effective at managing the impacts of third-party advertising in other zones. Providing for third-party advertising signs in commercial and industrial zones through a permitted activity rule is efficient at providing for these signs in these zones.

#### **Reasonably practicable alternative**

##### **Standards that allow for of third-party signs in all zones**

- Under this alternative, third-party signs would be a permitted activity, subject to standards in all zones.
- This option is more efficient as the costs associated with resource consents is reduced. However, it has the potential to increase the proliferation and clutter of third-party advertising signs throughout Lower Hutt, with consequential effects on character and amenity of residential, rural and open space areas. Under the proposed approach, these impacts would be assessed through a resource consent process.

##### **Provisions requiring resource consents for third-party advertising signs**

- Under this alternative all third-party signs would require resource consent.
- This option may have environmental benefits, in that it more tightly regulates the effects of signs, but this would be offset by the economic and social costs associated with consenting costs, including for signs in commercial and industrial zones where signs, including third-party advertising signs, can be commonplace.

## 8.4 Evaluation of specific provisions for digital signs

<p><b>SIGN-P4 Digital and illuminated signs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-R3 Digital signs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S9 Sign illumination</b></p>
<p><b>Why these provisions are included in the proposed District Plan</b></p>
<p>SIGN-P4 and SIGN-R3 ensure that digital signs are provided for through a resource consent process. The policy and rule are supported by a definition of digital signs, defined as <i>a sign which displays electronic graphics and text using electronic screens. Digital Signs can include both moving and static signage.</i> SIGN-S9 relates specifically to illumination and is applied as a standard to all signs via SIGN-R1.</p>
<p><b>Efficiency and effectiveness</b></p>
<p><b>Benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides for the economic benefits of digital signs on a case by case basis.</li> <li>• Enables the effects of digital signs on safety of the transport network to be considered through a resource consent process.</li> <li>• Manages the effects of digital signs, and other illuminated signs, on the environment on a case by case basis.</li> </ul> <p><b>Costs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs associated with requiring resource consent for digital signs, which can have flow-on effects for business that benefit from digital signs and advertising.</li> </ul> <p><b>Overall assessment</b></p> <p>The provisions are effective at managing the potential impacts of digital signs through by requiring resource consent for all digital signs, which allows the impacts to be assessed and addressed on a case-by-case basis through the resource consent process. However, the trade-off for this approach is that the provisions are less enabling of providing for digital signs, which can have benefits, particularly for business who benefit from advertising through digital signs.</p>
<p><b>Reasonably practicable alternative</b></p>
<p><b>Digital signs permitted subject to permitted activity standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under this alternative, digital signs would be permitted subject to meet specified standards. This would provide economic benefits associated with reduced</li> </ul>

consenting costs, and a greater ability to advertise. However, this is offset by potential environmental costs associated with the proliferation of digital signs.

## 8.5 Evaluation of specific provisions for signs in relation to historic heritage

**SIGN-P5 Signs on historic heritage buildings or heritage structures or in heritage areas**

**SIGN-R4 Signs on sites containing scheduled heritage buildings, sites containing scheduled heritage structures, or sites within a heritage area**

**Why these provisions are included in the proposed District Plan**

SIGN-P5 and SIGN-R4 ensure that signs on sites with heritage buildings and structures and in heritage areas are provided for through a permitted activity rule that provides for signs while protecting the heritage buildings and structures and contributing buildings in heritage areas. The policy and rule are supported by the objectives of the Historic Heritage chapter, which sets the overall objectives for historic heritage.

**Efficiency and effectiveness**

**Benefits**

- Provides for economic and social benefit of signs on heritage buildings, sites containing scheduled heritage buildings, or sites in heritage areas.
- Preserves the social and cultural values associated with heritage values.

**Costs**

- Signs may negatively impact on historic heritage, although scale of the effect from any one sign is likely to be minimal.

**Overall assessment**

The proposal provides a balanced approach. Effectiveness and efficiency are relatively high as the provisions provide for the benefit of signs, the setting of minimum standard for permitted activities and provision for new signs to be assessed on a case-by-case basis via the resource consent process.

**Reasonably practicable alternative**

**More enabling permitted activity standards for signs on heritage buildings, heritage structures or in heritage areas**

- Under this alternative, the standards for signs on heritage buildings, heritage structures and heritage buildings are less stringent. There would be a greater permitted baseline for signs. This would allow a greater variety of signs, with less limitations on where signs could be located.
- This option is more efficient and would have economic benefits associated with reduced consenting costs. However, this is more than offset by the potential cost to the social and cultural values associated with impacts on historic heritage values.

**More restrictive permitted activity standards for signs on heritage buildings, heritage structures or in heritage areas**

- Under this alternative the standards for signs on heritage buildings, heritage structures and in heritage areas would be more restrictive. More signs would require resource consent, and it could include an increase in the number and complexity of matters of discretion.
- This option has environmental benefits, in that it more effectively manages the effects of signs more tightly, but this would be a trade-off with the economic and social costs associated with consenting costs.

## 8.6 Evaluation of specific provisions for signs in relation to the transport network

<p><b>SIGN-P6 Impacts of signs on the transport network</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-R1 Signs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-R2 Third-party advertising signs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-R3 Digital signs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S1 Area of sign</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S2 Combined area of signs</b></p>	<p><b>SIGN-S3 Number of signs per site</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S4 Height of free standing signs</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S5 Height and placement of signs attached to buildings, structures and verandas</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S7 Election sign</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S8 Signs and transport network</b></p> <p><b>SIGN-S9 Sign illumination</b></p>
<p><b>Why these provisions are included in the proposed District Plan</b></p>	
<p>SIGN-P6 and SIGN-R1, SIGN-R2 and SIGN-R3 ensure that the effects of signs visible from the transport network are managed. Rules SIGN-R2 and SIGN-R3 include reference to the impacts outlined in SIGN-P6.</p>	

The effects on the safety of the roading network are further managed through permitted activity standard. Most of the standards relating to signs include the impact on the safe and efficiency of the transport network as a matter of discretion. SIGN-S8 specifically manages the design, location and content of signs in relation to the transport network.

### **Efficiency and effectiveness**

#### **Benefits**

- Controls on the effects of signs on the safety of the transport network.
- Provides for information signage for some for social and cultural events.
- Provides for economic benefits associated with advertising, although resource consent may be required.

#### **Costs**

- Permitting some signs visible from the transport network has the potential for signs to have a negative impact on safety of the transport network, although scale of the effect from any one sign is likely to be minimal.

#### **Overall assessment**

The proposed provisions are effective at managing the adverse effects on the safety of the roading network through permitted activity standards and matters of discretion that allow the impacts on the safety of the transport network of signs that require resource consent to be assessed on a case by case basis. The provisions are efficient for compliant signs, and economic costs would be a trade-off with the safety benefits.

### **Reasonably practicable alternative**

#### **More enabling permitted activity standards for signs visible from the transport network**

- Under this alternative, the standards for signs visible from the transport network are less restrictive. This would allow a greater variety of signs, with less limitations on where signs could be located.
- This option is more efficient at providing for signs and the benefits associated with them (as well as benefits of reduced consenting costs). However, this would be part of a trade-off against the potential adverse effects on the safety of the transport network.

#### **More restrictive permitted activity standards for signs visible from the transport network**

- Under this alternative, signs visible from the transport network would be less likely to be permitted, with more restrictive permitted activity standards.

- This option would more tightly regulate the impacts of sign on the transport network, but this would be part of a trade-off with the economic costs of the additional regulation.

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## 9 Summary

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(111) This evaluation has been undertaken in accordance with section 32 of the RMA in order to identify the need, benefits and costs and the appropriateness of the proposal having regard to its effectiveness and efficiency relative to other means in achieving the purpose of the RMA. The evaluation demonstrates that this proposal is the most appropriate option as:

- The proposed objective provides an objective specific to signs and clearly articulates the outcomes sought, including recognising the positive contribution of signs.
- A number of issues were identified with the efficiency and effectiveness of the operative District Plan provisions that the proposed provisions address, including better management of off-site signs and digital signs, better alignment with other regulations, and greater clarity to reduce uncertainty in implementation.
- The proposed provisions are considered the most efficient and effective method of providing for signs whilst managing their adverse effects.
- The proposed provisions effectively manage the adverse effects of signs on local character and amenity, historic heritage and the safe operation of the transport network.
- The proposed provisions are consistent with the National Planning Standards.

## 10 Attachments

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(112) The following documents are attached to this report:

- Appendix 1: Relevant Objectives and policies of the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region in relation to Signs

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## Appendix 1: Relevant Objectives and policies of the Regional Policy Statement for the Wellington Region in relation to Signs

Provision	Operative Regional Policy Statement	Proposed RPS Change 1
<p><b>Objective 4</b></p>	<p>The natural character of the coastal environment is protected from the adverse effects of inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</p>	<p>No Change</p>
<p><b>Policy 3</b></p>	<p><b>Protecting high natural character in the coastal environment –district and regional plans</b></p> <p>District and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods to protect high natural character in the coastal environment from inappropriate subdivision, development and/or use. Natural character should be assessed considering the following matters, with a site determined as having high natural character when the landscape is slightly modified or unmodified, the land-cover is dominated by indigenous vegetation and/or the vegetation cover is natural and there are no apparent buildings, structures or infrastructure:</p> <p>(a) The extent to which natural elements, patterns and processes occur, including:</p>	<p><b>Protecting high natural character in the coastal environment – district and regional plans</b></p> <p>District and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods to protect high natural character in the coastal environment from inappropriate subdivision, development and/or use. <u>In partnership with mana whenua / tangata whenua</u>, Natural character should be assessed considering the following matters, with a site determined as having high natural character when the landscape is slightly modified or unmodified, the land-cover is dominated by indigenous vegetation and/or the vegetation cover is natural and there are no apparent buildings, structures or infrastructure:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) natural elements: the products of natural processes – such as landforms, water forms, vegetation and land cover;</li> <li>(ii) natural processes: the ecological, climatic and geophysical processes that underlie the expression and character of the place, site or area;</li> <li>(iii) natural patterns: the visual expression or spatial distribution of natural elements which are, or which appear to be, a product of natural processes; and/or</li> <li>(iv) surroundings: the setting or context, such that the place, site or area contributes to an understanding of the natural history of the wider area.</li> </ul> <p>(b) The nature and extent of modifications to the place, site or area, including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) physical alterations by people to the landscape, its landforms, waterforms, vegetation, land cover and to the natural patterns associated with these elements;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the extent to which natural elements, patterns and processes occur, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) natural elements: the products of natural processes – such as landforms, water forms, vegetation and land cover;</li> <li>(ii) natural processes: the ecological, climatic and geophysical processes that underlie the expression and character of the place, site or area;</li> <li>(iii) natural patterns: the visual expression or spatial distribution of natural elements which are, or which appear to be, a product of natural processes; and/or</li> <li>(iv) surroundings: the setting or context, such that the place, site or area contributes to an understanding of the natural history of the wider area; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>(b) the nature and extent of modifications to the place, site or area, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) physical alterations by people to the landscape, its landforms, <del>waterforms</del> <u>water forms</u>, vegetation, land cover and to the</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(ii) the presence, location, scale and density of buildings and structures, including infrastructure, whether appearing to be interconnected or isolated, and the degree of intrusiveness of these structures on the natural character of the place;</li> <li>(iii) the temporal character of the modification – such as, whether it is fleeting or temporary, transitory, transitional or a permanent alteration to the character of the place, site or area; and/or</li> <li>(iv) any existing influences or pressures on the dynamic ecological and geophysical processes contributing to the presence and patterns of natural elements, such that these may change and the natural elements and/or patterns may become threatened over time.</li> </ul> <p>(c) Social values: the place, site or area has meaning for a particular community or communities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) sentimental: the natural character of a place, site or area has a strong or special</li> </ul>	<p>natural patterns associated with these elements;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(ii) the presence, location, scale and density of buildings and structures, including infrastructure, whether appearing to be interconnected or isolated, and the degree of intrusiveness of these structures on the natural character of the place;</li> <li>(iii) the temporal character of the modification – such as, whether it is fleeting or temporary, transitory, transitional or a permanent alteration to the character of the place, site or area; and/or</li> <li>(iv) any existing influences or pressures on the dynamic ecological and geophysical processes contributing to the presence and patterns of natural elements, such that these may change and the natural elements and/or patterns may become threatened over time.</li> </ul> <p><del>(e) Social values: the place, site or area has meaning for a particular community or communities, including:</del></p>
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	<p>association with a particular community; and/or</p> <p>(ii) recognition: the place, site or area is held in high public esteem for its natural character value, or its contribution to the sense of identity of a particular community.</p>	<p><del>(i) sentimental: the natural character of a place, site or area has a strong or special association with a particular community; and/or</del></p> <p><del>(ii) recognition: the place, site or area is held in high public esteem for its natural character value, or its contribution to the sense of identity of a particular community.</del></p>
<b>Policy 26</b>	<p><b>Protecting outstanding natural features and landscape values – district and regional plans</b></p> <p>Where outstanding natural features and landscapes have been identified in accordance with policy 25, district and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or methods that protect outstanding natural features and landscape values from inappropriate subdivision, use or development.</p>	No Change
<b>Policy 28</b>	<p><b>Policy 28: Managing special amenity landscape values – district and regional plans</b></p> <p>Where special amenity landscapes have been identified in accordance with policy 27, district and regional plans shall include policies and/or methods (which may include rules) for managing these</p>	No Change

	<p>landscapes in order to maintain or enhance their landscape values in the context of the continuation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) existing land uses that contribute to these landscape values,</li> <li>(b) predominant existing land uses that are provided for within the underlying zoning, and</li> <li>(c) other lawfully established activities.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Policy 35</b></p>	<p><b>Policy 35: Preserving the natural character of the coastal environment – consideration</b></p> <p>When considering an application for a resource consent, notice of requirement, or a change, variation or review of a district or regional plan, particular regard shall be given to preserving the natural character of the coastal environment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) minimising any adverse effects from point source and non-point source discharges, so that aquatic ecosystem health is safeguarded;</li> <li>(b) protecting the values associated with estuaries and bays, beaches and dune systems, including the unique physical processes that occur within and between them from inappropriate</li> </ul>	

	<p>subdivision, use and development, so that healthy ecosystems are maintained;</p> <p>(c) maintaining or enhancing amenity – such as, open space and scenic values – and opportunities for recreation and the enjoyment of the coast by the public;</p> <p>(d) minimising any significant adverse effects from use and enjoyment of the coast by the public;</p> <p>(e) safeguarding the life supporting capacity of coastal and marine ecosystems;</p> <p>(f) maintaining or enhancing biodiversity and the functioning of ecosystems; and</p> <p>(g) protecting scientific and geological features from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</p>	
<b>Objective 15</b>	Historic heritage is identified and protected from inappropriate modification, use and development.	
<b>Policy 22</b>	<p><b>Protecting historic heritage values – district and regional plans</b></p> <p>District and regional plans shall include policies, rules and/or other methods that:</p>	



	<p>(a) protect the significant historic heritage values associated with places, sites and areas identified in accordance with policy 21, from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development; and</p> <p>(b) avoid the destruction of unidentified archaeological sites and wāhi tapu with significant historic heritage values.</p>	
<b>Objective 17</b>	The region's outstanding natural features and landscapes are identified and their landscape values protected from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.	
<b>Policy 24</b>	<p><b>Protecting indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values – district and regional plans</b></p> <p>District and regional plans shall include policies, rules and methods to protect indigenous ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values from inappropriate subdivision, use and development.</p>	
<b>Objective 18</b>	The region's special amenity landscapes are identified and those landscape values that contribute to	

	amenity and the quality of the environment are maintained or enhanced.	
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FINAL DRAFT