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VC37**ADVERTISING SIGNS ADJOINING THE METROPOLITAN RING ROAD POLICY**

This policy applies to all advertising signs on land or buildings, which adjoin or have exposure to that part of the Metropolitan Ring Road within the City of Whittlesea.

Policy Basis

The Municipal Strategic Statement recognises the need to progressively upgrade the appearance of the existing industrial areas and the relationship between the appearance of these areas and investment within the City of Whittlesea. The location and level of signage in proximity to major roads and other transport routes is a key consideration.

The Metropolitan Ring Road by virtue of its location, function and capacity to influence patterns of development will have a major impact upon the City. In its capacity as a link of metropolitan significance, the Ring Road will act as a 'gateway' to the City providing for many people the first impression of the municipality.

Major earthworks and engineering have resulted in large areas of cut and fill with elevated bridges and embankments, which allow new panoramic views of the area immediately adjacent to the road and the surrounding landscape. As well as exposing some of the better visual attributes of this area, this new road has also revealed some of its less visual appealing elements that were previously screened or less visible.

As this new road has opened it has led to an increase in the number of planning applications for large pole mounted and sky-type signs and additional signage on building faces exposed to the freeway alignment which have attempted to take advantage of the increased viewing opportunities and increased road usage.

This Policy provides guidance to applicants on where Council considers appropriate locations for these signs and the types of design elements which should be incorporated in the signs to ensure that they enhance the visual amenity of the area.

Objectives

- To maintain and enhance the high level of visual amenity in the road corridor and in adjacent residential areas.
- To ensure that any signs do not detract from, interfere with, or cause a hazard to the safe passage of traffic.
- To ensure that signs are located to avoid overcrowding or clutter of signage opportunities.
- To provide for the appropriate identification of the occupiers or users of industrial premises.
- To encourage the design of buildings which feature architecturally integrated signage locations.
- To encourage a high standard of design and siting of pole and identifier signs integrated with landscape treatments.
- To encourage integrated architectural treatment of signs and their supporting structures.
- To preserve the effectiveness of signs in preferred locations.

Policy

It is local policy to:

- Discourage major promotion signs and sky signs on open sites where they will be a dominant visual element in the landscape and detract from the visual amenity of the road corridor;
- Discourage illuminated promotional signage from being located immediately adjacent to residential areas where acoustic barrier devices, mounding and landscaping have been installed in an attempt to improve or maintain the amenity of residents, where the sign is visible from surrounding residential areas;
- Discourage signs which obscure major viewlines;
- Discourage the use of intermittent flashing lighting or other potentially distracting elements on signs;
- Discourage the use of temporary A-frames, streamers and bunting style signs;
- Encourage the use and design or land use themes in the area that are adaptable to the sign design including colours and materials such as the metal work of the pedestrian bridge;
- Encourage major promotion signs or sky signs to be located in industrial zones where it can be demonstrated that the signs have been sited to:
 - Minimise impacts on viewing corridors / major views;
 - Not be visible from surrounding residential areas;
 - Use colours and materials derived from the materials palette of the Ring Road landscape treatments.
- Encourage the development of buildings that feature purpose-built locations for signage and advertising opportunities that do not visually dominate the streetscape and area;
- Encourage the development of a community or precinct-based approach to directory signs in industrial estates to reduce the overall number of signs and increase user convenience and legibility.

It is Policy that proposals are assessed against the following criteria:

- Major promotion signs and sky signs should be spaced at a sufficient distance (minimum 1 kilometre spacing) to ensure that they do not dominate the overall setting and their impact is not reduced from an advertising perspective;
- Major promotion signs and sky signs should be no higher than the height of existing buildings on the subject land or substantial adjacent structures on abutting or adjacent sites;
- The appearance of the sign from all angles should be considered, and where possible all supports, cabling, lighting and electricals should be concealed or integral to the overall design.
- Signs should have a quality architectural presentation, such as providing an architecturally interesting skyline, silhouette and, where applicable, should incorporate innovative and visually interesting supporting structures.
- Signs on building walls should only be used to identify the business conducted on the property and not for promotional purposes. These signs should be designed to complement the building and surrounding area, and be limited in area so as not to create visual clutter or a distraction to motorists.

Application Requirements

An application for advertising signage must be accompanied by three copies of all plans (drawn to scale) showing:

- The location of the proposed sign on the site or building.
- The dimensions and height above ground level of the proposed sign.
- Details of any form of illumination.
- The colour, wording and lettering style of the proposed sign.
- Details of landscaping (for a pole sign).
- A photomontage showing the proposed sign in its context from key viewing points and a context plan showing its impact on any neighbouring signs and buildings.

Policy Reference

Landscape Analysis - Signage Strategy Background Report Northern Ring Road, City of Whittlesea, June 1999.