

**MINUTES OF THE KAIKŌURA DISTRICT COUNCIL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING  
TO HEAR AND DELIBERATE SUBMISSIONS ON THE DRAFT SIGNS BYLAW HELD  
ON 4<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2026 AT 9.00AM, IN TOTARA COUNCIL CHAMBERS,  
96 WEST END, KAIKOURA**

**PRESENT:** Mayor C Mackle (Chair), Deputy Mayor V Gulleford, Councillor C Smith, Councillor T Blunt, Councillor J Diver, Councillor J McInnes, Councillor M Redwood, Councillor K Heays

**IN ATTENDANCE:** W Doughty (Chief Executive Officer), P Kearney (Senior Manager Corporate Services), D Hirst (Policy Planner), J York (Regulatory Manager), B Makin (Executive Officer-Minutes)

**1. KARAKIA**

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for lateness were noted for Councillor T Blunt, who joined the meeting at 9.01am.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

**4. Overview of responses for the draft Signs Bylaw**

A high-level overview of the responses to the Draft Signs Bylaw was provided. A total of 12 submissions were received.

Officers noted that a number of large, ageing sign structures were not being upgraded because the current bylaw would require sign sizes to be reduced when replaced. The bylaw review therefore needed to consider the wider needs of the community.

The key reasons for regulation under the bylaw relate to health and safety and nuisance. The Local Government Act and associated case law require Council to act reasonably when addressing these matters. This means sign size cannot be reduced to a point that unreasonably impacts businesses. Any changes must be proportionate, fair, and enforceable.

The Statement of Proposal included comparisons with other councils across the country. It was noted that, in the event of a judicial review, the courts will consider benchmarks for reasonableness. Elected Members were asked to consider whether the proposed bylaw is fair, enforceable, proportionate, and reasonable.

**RESOLUTION**

THAT the Council:

- a) Receives this report for information.
- b) Considers the submission feedback and initial officer response and provides feedback and direction to Council Officers following the hearings and deliberations process.

Moved: Mayor Mackle  
Seconded: Councillor M Redwood

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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## **5. SUBMITTERS TO BE HEARD**

### **9.10am Jason Hill**

Jason Hill spoke to his submission and acknowledged the positives in the draft bylaw, noting that several of his earlier suggestions had been incorporated into the proposed officer amendments. Officers clarified that the tracked-change version included in the agenda was staff-generated and had not yet been approved by Council.

He raised concern about the timing of the consultation period, noting that tourism and hospitality businesses were too busy during peak season to fully engage. He appreciated that an extension to the submissions period had been granted. Mr Hill advised that he had obtained local business support for his position and had presented this to the Mayor.

Mr Hill discussed the definition of freestanding signs, including issues relating to permanent planters and intermediary boundary structures. He expressed concern that a fixed numerical limit for freestanding signs did not reflect differences in business size or frontage. He noted that his business frontage includes planters and that he had paused proposed signage plans pending the bylaw review. He suggested that a scalable approach be adopted, using larger shop frontages as an example of where fixed limits may not be suitable. He also raised concerns that limiting portable signs to a fixed number could create visual clutter depending on the scale of the business. He further noted that the scale, size, and physical footprint of a business, as well as its contribution to the local economy, should be considered when determining signage allowances. Mr Hill also queried why Council has no jurisdiction over caravans/ mobile food vans and signage placed on private property.

### **9.19am Ralph Hogan**

Ralph Hogan highlighted that the tracked-change version of the bylaw addressed many of the issues he had previously raised.

He noted that during the 2023 bylaw review, Council had committed to enforcing all offsite signage. Early in 2024, enforcement activity increased and approximately 15 signs were removed; however, enforcement later declined. He commented that a number of signs were still present along the scenic highway.

Mr Hogan referred to the size limits for tourism and accommodation signs compared with the limit for other businesses. He expressed concern that the proposed allowance of two subdivision signs would result in 12 m<sup>2</sup> of signage, which he believed was excessive. He suggested that a 3 m<sup>2</sup> limit would be more appropriate. He provided further examples relating to offsite signage, including a large billboard erected in 2013 or so to display a Hellers sponsorship sign, which was later replaced by a Hunting & Fishing advertisement. He explained that the 2023 working group had agreed that such signs would not be eligible for amnesty; however, a 2024 amendment introduced amnesty for sponsorship signs, which he considered a significant change. He noted that the sign had since changed again to advertise the White Morph well after the September 2023 cut-off and therefore did not qualify for amnesty under the current proposal. He also queried whether the DE sign might seek amnesty under the sponsorship category. He confirmed that he viewed naming-rights signs as being distinct from sponsorship signs, as naming-rights signs effectively become the name of the facility and therefore require clear separate rules.

### **9.31am – Ted Howard**

Ted Howard spoke to his submission and provided a handout in support of his presentation. He referred to Ralph Hogan's earlier comments regarding the definition of a sign, noting that the major sponsorship sign at the Golf Club had originally been approved by Council before the Signs Bylaw was introduced.

He explained that, when comparing the size of the sign to the overall size of the golf course, every sponsorship sign on the course would technically fall under that definition. Ted advised that the signage brings in approximately \$27,500 of revenue to the club each year. As the volunteer secretary and IT maintenance support for the club, he highlighted the significant impact on club operations and community fundraising if the signs were no longer permitted. The sponsorship funding contributes to the Sports Hub and wider community initiatives.

Ted explicitly asked the Council to approve the ongoing use of the sponsorship signs in their current locations, areas, and formats. He noted that while the sponsoring businesses change every 3–4 years, the sign locations, dimensions, and purpose have remained consistent, serving as long-standing sponsorship panels rather than commercial advertising. He acknowledged the need to protect open space but felt that the Golf Club's signage was entirely proportionate given the scale of the property. He clarified that while sponsors have changed multiple times over the years, the physical dimensions and placement of the signs have not. Their purpose has consistently been to support the club through sponsorship.

#### 9.38am Garry Robertson

Garry Robertson spoke to his submission. He noted that the proposed officer's changes to the draft had included provisions and exemptions within the draft bylaw to allow certain signs to qualify, and he expressed support for the Golf Club's position and earlier points made by Ted. He believed the town required sponsorship signs.

Mr Robertson highlighted that Kaikōura currently faces a housing shortage. In his view, the size of subdivision and real-estate signs was less important than ensuring people were aware that houses and sections were available. He considered the existing signs to be fit for purpose, compliant with NZTA requirements, and safe. He advised that three vehicles had previously struck the fence or knocked out the pole in that area and noted that overly small signs could pose a greater safety risk if drivers needed to slow down or focus excessively to read them.

He thanked D Hirst for his recommendations and expertise, P Kearney for his initiative, and J York for smoothing processes throughout the review.

Clarification was sought regarding the large triangular sign discussed earlier. It was confirmed to be approximately 4.8 m by 2.4 m, with Mr Robertson stating it was a good-quality, safe sign that sat clearly within the visual line and complied with NZTA requirements. He also noted that the Vicarage Views sign was slightly smaller, allowing people an opportunity to stop safely to view it. He commented that both the Ocean Ridge and Golf Club signs were well presented and well maintained by their respective owners. Mr Robertson was asked whether he was aware that the signs in question breached both the current bylaw and the proposed bylaw in terms of allowable size. Mr Robertson responded that one of the signs was already in place under an amnesty provision, and that the new bylaw was still under development. He further commented that he did not feel the existing rules were fit for purpose and believed the bylaw had been created by a working group and what he described as a "vexatious executive."

#### 9.47am Daniel Stevenson on behalf of Tania Ross

Daniel Stevenson presented on behalf of submitter Tania Ross. He requested that the Kaikōura Airport be considered differently from the rural zone in which it is currently located, noting that the businesses operating there are commercial in nature. He asked that the airport receive the same consideration and signage allowances as those applied along Beach Road.

Daniel advised that signage had been prepared for installation on the hangar and had already received approval from NZTA. However, the proposal was declined through the KDC resource consent process.

He therefore sought amendments to the bylaw that would enable appropriate commercial signage at the airport, consistent with the operational needs of the businesses located there.

#### 9.50am Richard Watherston

Richard Watherston asked the Council to consider an exemption for the sign located at the Kaikōura Business Park. He advised that the sign is approximately 12 m<sup>2</sup> in size and noted that Invercargill City Council allows signs up to 14 m<sup>2</sup> under its bylaw.

He explained that the primary reason for retaining the sign was safety. NZTA had previously requested that the proposed inland road be realigned to the south because the current alignment was too close to the bridge. He noted that relocating the road is a significant civil works process, and the sign helps inform the public that the road is shifting and that works are underway. He also advised that the sign is important for marketing the development, including section sizes and availability.

He further commented that Kaikōura District Council would ultimately benefit from the development once completed, as it would generate increased rates revenue despite the Council not having provided infrastructure services to the site. He requested that the sign be allowed to remain in its current location, size, and dimensions.

#### 9.54am Courtnay Wilson

Courtnay Wilson thanked staff for their work on the draft bylaw and acknowledged the efforts of submitters. She noted that everyone wanted to see Kaikōura flourish, even though people held different views on how best to achieve this. She expressed appreciation for the complexity of managing signage while also protecting Kaikōura's natural beauty.

Her primary argument was that "less is more." She believed that an excess of signage created visual clutter that reduced overall visual amenity. Courtnay referred to the city of Bath in the UK, which restricts signage to preserve its historic character. She felt that Kaikōura, with its natural beauty, could similarly benefit from limiting the size and number of signs, which she noted could also support community wellbeing, including reducing visual stress and anxiety. She considered it easier and more effective to have fewer signs overall. Courtnay also commented that subdivision signs currently have an outsized impact and questioned their necessity, noting that people can access information on their phones.

She concluded by encouraging Kaikōura to lead by example and not simply follow what other towns are doing, advocating for a more restrained and uncluttered signage environment.

### **6. SUBMITTERS WHO CHOSE NOT TO SPEAK**

The Council reviewed each of the submissions of those that chose not to speak. The submissions were noted, and additional comments were highlighted on the following submissions. The Council deliberated each submission due to the low number of submitters. Councillors were keen to see that each submitter received a more detailed response on the points raised in their submission.

#### Dave Barrett – Submission #1

Submitted that physical signage is outdated and should be replaced with electronic advertising to reduce visual clutter. Officers advised this approach would be disproportionate and not legally robust.

#### Mark Baxter – Submission #2

Sought an increased allowance for portable signs around the town centre and proposed a frontage-based formula. Officers noted the complexity of enforcement and advised that amendments already proposed would increase portable signs to three per shop.

#### Leslie Croucher – Submission #3

Opposed the draft bylaw. No reasons were provided.

#### Martha Wagoner – Submission #10

Submitted that large signs detract from amenity values and should not be permitted. Officers advised that imposing a cap lower than current allowances would be disproportionate.

#### Susanne Dunnett – Submission #4

Requested clarification of the definition of freestanding signs.

#### Further discussion:

It was queried whether a frontage-based formula had been provided by submitters. Officers confirmed that one submission proposed allowing one flatboard per four metres of frontage.

Questions were raised about how a frontage-based approach would apply to larger sites, with clarification that it would apply only within the Town Centre zone.

It was noted that the current bylaw allows one portable sign in the Town Centre, and the proposal would increase this to three per shop. Concerns were raised that multiple flatboards could obstruct the required two-metre clear footpath corridor, with many shops already non-compliant under existing limits.

Clarification was also sought regarding how fixed signs fit within the framework, with officers confirming these fall under building-mounted signage.

The meeting adjourned at 10.12am and reconvened at 10.30am.

### **7. DELIBERATIONS TO THE DRAFT SIGNS BYLAW**

Following the hearing of submissions, elected members considered each of the issues raised. Officers provided clarification on the proposed amendments and responded to questions. The following points were discussed:

#### **1. Portable Signs (Flatboards, Sandwich Boards, Flags)**

Discussion took place on the number and type of portable signs permitted within the Town Centre and Mixed Use zones.

It was noted that:

- The draft proposal increased portable signs from one to three per shop.
- Flatboards lean against the building, while sandwich boards are placed kerbside.
- Sandwich boards were considered to present health and safety and nuisance issues, particularly where they reduce the required two-metre clear footpath corridor.

A frontage-based approach was discussed, with one submission proposing one flatboard per four metres of frontage (up to three). Concerns were raised about the practicality of enforcing this, and how it would apply to sites without a traditional frontage.

Agreed amendment:

“One flatboard per four metres of frontage, up to a maximum of three, and one sandwich board total in both the Town Centre and Mixed Use zones.”

Flags were noted as a separate category, with concerns raised about their impact on public space.

#### **2. Building Display Face**

Clarification was sought on how much of a building facade could be used for signage. Members agreed that the allowable area should be clearly stated.

Agreed amendment:

“The building display face permitted for signage will be set at 50% of the facade.”

### **3. Building Structure, Planters, and Temporary Elements**

Members discussed whether planters and similar structures should be considered “buildings” for the purpose of sign placement. Officers advised that the definition of a building already includes temporary structures that are not fixed to the ground.

Clarification was also provided that certain large structures, such as the Caves and subdivision signage, would be classified as buildings for enforcement consistency.

### **4. Dual-Face Signs (One vs Two Signs)**

The interpretation of signs with multiple display faces was considered. Members discussed the need to clarify when a double-sided sign should be treated as one sign or two.

The draft wording proposed that a sign is considered a single sign if both faces are visible from one viewpoint. Discussion centred around visibility angles and practicality.

Officers will refine the wording to ensure clarity and enforceability.

### **5. NZTA and Road Corridor Boundaries**

It was clarified that NZTA’s authority applies only within five metres of the road corridor. Misunderstandings arise because many people refer to NZTA guidelines as if they were bylaws.

Officers will work with NZTA to confirm which existing signs fall within their enforcement area and will include a diagram in the bylaw to illustrate NZTA versus Council jurisdiction along State Highway corridors.

### **6. Subdivision Signs, Sponsorship Signs, and Exemption Pathway**

Members discussed the proposed size limits and the exemption process.

Key points included:

- Subdivision signs set at 6 m<sup>2</sup>.
- Sponsorship signs set at 3 m<sup>2</sup>.
- Exemptions should be aligned with subdivisions containing 20 or more lots, rather than the previously suggested six.
- Any sign over 6 m<sup>2</sup> would require a building consent and could then apply for an exemption through Council.
- The exemption pathway should be robust and not rely on broad amnesty provisions.

Agreed approach:

Remove the amnesty clause and rely on a clear, structured exemption pathway tied to building consent requirements.

### **7. Airport Signage (New Table 7)**

Members considered whether the signage rules for the Kaikōura Airport should align with those in the Town Centre and Mixed Use zones.

Key issues included:

- The number of businesses operating at the airport.
- Concerns about excessive signage if all tenants were permitted multiple signs.
- The need for clearer and more consistent rules.

Officers will review the table with the intention of ensuring caps are practical and avoid proliferation.

### **8. Sponsorship and Naming-Rights Signs**

Questions were raised about whether naming-rights signage should be treated differently from sponsorship signs due to its wider visibility and function. Officers will consider whether naming-rights signs require a separate definition or whether they can be incorporated into the sponsorship category with clearer criteria.

## 9. Mobile Commercial Units

Members supported the inclusion of mobile commercial units within the bylaw, with officers to ensure appropriate definitions are added to Table 1.

## 10. Fees, Community Facilities, and Compliance Timeframes

It was noted that:

- Exemption applications may incur fees under the existing fees and charges framework.
- Community facilities will not receive fee waivers under 'community good'.
- A one-year compliance window is available for affected facilities to update their signage.

Officers will review how schools and other education facilities are captured within the definitions.

## 11. Event and Temporary Signs

Temporary signs were confirmed as already accommodated under the minor temporary signs provisions.

## 12. Caravans and On-Site Signage

Caravans staying on a site for more than four hours will be subject to the signage rules of the zone they are located in. Signage on private land still needs to comply to avoid unfair advantage.

This will prohibit situations such as mobile vendors placing signage where it is otherwise disallowed (e.g., Jimmy Armours).

## 8. CLOSE MEETING

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 12.24pm

Moved: Mayor Mackle

Seconded: Councillor C Allen-Smith

Chairperson



Signed by

\_\_\_\_\_ Date 30/03/2026

THIS RECORD WILL BE HELD IN ELECTRONIC FORM ONLY