

MEDIA RELEASE



Signs Bylaw 2026 – Release Communications

The Signs Bylaw has been updated to address issues identified after the 2023 review, particularly around clarity, fairness, and how the rules worked in practice. From the outset, the review aimed to reduce confusion, improve safety and visual amenity, and ensure signage rules were workable for businesses, community groups, and developers, while protecting Kaikōura's character. Public consultation and hearings helped Council refine the draft bylaw.

Submissions highlighted concerns about visual clutter, pedestrian safety, sign legibility, and consistency across different locations and activities. In response, Council confirmed a district-wide baseline approach to signage limits, while refining the rules to be more proportionate, location-specific, and easier to understand and enforce. The final Signs Bylaw 2026 reflects Council's decisions following hearings and deliberations on 4 March 2026.

Key changes include clearer and fairer rules for portable signs in the Mixed Use and Commercial Zones. Businesses are now allowed one sandwich board each, with flatboards scaled to shop frontage. The bylaw also introduces rules for mobile commercial units, requiring those operating in commercial areas to comply with the same signage rules as fixed businesses, supporting consistency and fair enforcement.

The bylaw also expended the cap size limits for subdivision and sponsorship signage. Subdivision signage is now clearly provided for, allowing one or two signs depending on site size and road access, while retaining a 6 m² size limit. Sponsorship signs now have a clear district-wide cap of 3 m², recognising their community value while preventing general advertising.

A new signage table has been added for Kaikōura Airport, introducing a more structured approach through shared gateway and directory signs, lower size and height limits, and stronger controls on portable signage.

Finally, the bylaw improves certainty and compliance through clearer definitions, updated sign-area measurement rules, zone maps, and an updated exemption pathway which requires full Council approval. The previous blanket amnesty for existing signs has been replaced with a 12-month transition period for signs previously under amnesty, supporting consistent long-term compliance.

Council thanks everyone who made submissions or participated in the consultation process. Your feedback played an important role in shaping a clearer and fairer Signs Bylaw for Kaikōura.