



## PRIVATE SIGNAGE ON COUNCIL LAND

<b>Policy No.:</b>	GTC-C-17	<b>Policy type:</b>	Operational
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### Document History/Version Control

Version No.	Date	Details	Comment
		New policy	

### Amendment/Administrative History

Date	Details	Comment	Authorised by
		Nil	

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## 1. OBJECTIVE

This Policy is intended to regulate private signage on Council owned land and Council managed Roads (Council land), to ensure that public spaces remain free from signage clutter and maintain a high degree of public amenity and safety.

## 2. TYPE OF POLICY

As per Section 9 of Policy GTC-12, this policy is categorised as a Council Policy.

This categorisation is consistent with the definitions as stated in Policy GTC-12 which are as follows:

Council - Policies pertaining to the Governance of the Council and the activities of its elected members, including the establishment of Committees, and the government of the municipality including resident and ratepayer compliance policies and by-laws.

Operational - Policies pertaining to the operational, administrative, and internal matters of the Council, including internal governance, internal committees, and operational matters of service delivery.

## 3. SCOPE

This policy relates to the erection of private advertising signage, community event signage, sponsorship signage and the like on Council owned and managed land and Council managed road reserves, including permanent, temporary and portable signs.

The policy does not regulate signs on private property (note: approval may still be required in accordance with the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993).

The policy does not apply to regulatory signs, street name signs or community information signs erected by or on behalf of Council or a statutory authority.

The policy does not apply to above awning signs, below awning signs, awning fascia signs, hanging signs or projecting wall signs as defined by the Tasmanian Planning Provisions when attached to a legally constructed building or awning, which may extend over Council land.

The policy does not apply to any signage program initiated and managed by Council or another entity approved by Council, which may incorporate business directories or individual private signs, intended to allow equitable access to signage opportunities, achieve design consistency and to ensure maintenance of public amenity.

The policy does not apply to private signage on Council land where the sign owner has entered into a commercial lease agreement with the Council including financial compensation at a market rate.

This policy does not apply to temporary event signage associated with community events for

which an “event application” has been submitted to Council. Approval for signage issued under the event application process may differ from the limitations included under the *Temporary Event Signage* heading below.

The policy does not relate to signage erected by Council for a public purpose or in the course of undertaking any Council function, event or business activity.

The policy does not override the statutory requirement for a planning permit in accordance with the Planning Scheme and the Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993 or the provisions of any other Act.

The policy does not address other forms of street furniture (including café barriers) or use of public land for street dining, coin operated games or ride on toys.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

**Council land** – means land that is owned or managed by the Council, including Council owned premises, roads and road reserves, parks and reserves. It does not include land that is leased to a private or public entity under a commercial lease arrangement for their exclusive use.

**Sign** - means a device, structure, depiction, or the like, that is intended to give information, advertise or attract attention to a place, product, service or event.

**Portable signs** – means a sign not permanently attached to the ground or to a building or other structure and is removed on a daily basis. This includes A frame and T frame sandwich boards, banners, tear drop signs and lightweight flag signs.

**Temporary event sign** – means a sign erected for a one off or occasional event. This includes community events, charity events, car shows, school or community group recruitment drives or fundraisers, markets, and the like. May include private business events only where there is a broader public interest i.e. employment forums or expeditions.

**Fingerboard signs** - means basic signs erected at street junctions to provide key directional information for residents, visitors and emergency services about the street name and location of key destination points, for example public facilities. Also known as street blades.

**Community information signs** – means signs which communicate public information or direction signs to community facilities such as ovals, health centre, swimming pools and the like, erected by or on behalf of a Council or a statutory authority.

**Regulatory signs** – signs that provide notice of rules, laws, regulations, road signs and warning signs, erected by or on behalf of a Council or a statutory authority.

**Election sign** - means an impermanent sign identifying candidates or promoting a political party for local, state or federal government elections.

**Political Signage** - means signage erected for the purpose of conveying a political message or protest.

**Real estate sign** - means a sign erected for the purposes of advertising a parcel of land or building for sale, lease or let.

**Sponsorship Signage** – means signage erected at a sportsground or other community facility in recognition of financial or in kind support to a club or community group based at that facility.

**Non-compliant Existing Signs** – means signs which already exist prior to the effective date of this policy.

#### 5. LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This policy aligns with:

Future Direction (1) Community pride  
1/ All are valued and included

I. Taking a ‘whole of community’ approach to everything

2/ All communities take pride in their place

I. Developing well-designed public spaces which are attractive, safe and support the area's identity and reputation

3/ A strong, recognisable, positive reputation

I. Branding our produce and products

Future Direction (2) Prosperity for all in all aspects of life

10/ Local shops and cafes thrive and respond to local and visitor needs

I. Focusing on 'Support Local; Buy Local; Employ Local'

Future direction (3) Progressive well-resourced communities

8/ Public infrastructure relevant to needs

I. Making sure the place works well through good design, safety standards asset management and ongoing maintenance

Future direction (4) Leadership and accountable governance

2/ Planning and regulatory responsibilities are undertaken fairly and openly

I. Building knowledge and understanding of planning and regulatory responsibilities and processes

II. Compliance customer service standards and processes

## **6. RELATED LEGISLATION**

The *Local Government Highways Act 1982* and the *Local Government (Building and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1993* empower Local Government Authorities to control signs proposed for erection on local roads.

For public land, such as parks and reserves, Council has Common Law rights to manage the land and to allow or refuse to allow the erection of 3rd party signs.

The Tasmanian Planning Scheme - George Town, regulates signage on all land, both private and public.

The *Roads and Jetties Act 1935* states that any structure including an advertising sign, billboard or poster erected within any State Road reservation requires the prior approval of the Minister administering the Act.

George Town Council's Caretaker Period Policy (GTC-25) prohibits use of Council land for distributing electoral materials.

## 7. RISK CONSIDERATIONS

This policy aligns with the objectives and strategies of the George Town Council Risk Management Policy and Risk Management Strategy.

A risk assessment will be undertaken on a case by case basis prior to approval of signage in accordance with the ISO Risk Management Guidelines . The risk assessment is to include, but is not limited to:

- Placement of any sign boards on footpaths do not obstruct the traffic and are compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA compliant)
- That it be weighted as not to fly around during strong weather conditions.
- An authorised person/s is in control of placing and removing the sign – (Nighttime/ weather conditions etc.)
- Any fixed sign to be erected under council's conditions. Advice or guidance should be obtained e.g. location and placement. The height of the sign as to not have anyone walk / ride into it etc.

## 8. POLICY

George Town Council acknowledges that signs form an important part of the urban and rural environment. They fulfil a range of functions including meeting statutory, commercial and community objectives.

Council's management practices for signage will enhance the environment, preserve amenity and promote a consistent and equitable approach throughout the municipal area.

Council will at all times make public amenity, safety and accessibility a priority when considering signage on Council land.

No sign will be erected on the road reserve without the formal consent of Council or one of its delegated officers or representatives.

All privately owned signs must be covered by public liability insurance to the value of \$10 million.

The following information provides further guidance on private signs:

### **Prohibited Signs**

#### **Permanent Business Advertising Signage**

Unless specifically provided for, Council does not approve permanent business advertising signs on public land as a matter of course.

Permanent business advertising signage will only be considered in situations where a commercial lease agreement or license is issued, including financial compensation at a market value for the commercial use of public land. Such lease arrangements are at the discretion of Council. Business owners are encouraged to seek commercial relationships with private landowners for the erection of remote signage, noting that such signs remain subject to approvals under the *Land use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* and the *Building Act 2016*.

### Political Signs/Election Signs

Council does not permit the use of Council owned / managed land for election signage associated with a Local, State or Federal Election.

Also refer to George Town Council's Caretaker Period Policy (GTC-25) with respect to use of Council land for distribution of electoral material.

Election signs may be fixed directly to the external side of a frontage fence of a private property, but must otherwise be fully contained within the property to which they relate.

Council does not permit the erection of political signs on Council land.

### Real Estate Signs

Council does not permit the erection of real estate signs on Council land, unless they are being erected on behalf of Council and located on the land to which they relate. Real estate signs may be fixed directly to the external side of a frontage fence, but must otherwise be fully contained within the property to which they relate.

### **Permitted Signs – Approval required before Placement**

#### Portable Signs

Council permits the placement of portable signs related to private businesses in the Council Road reserve, provided they comply with the following:

- Must be immediately adjacent the premises to which they relate. Remotely located portable signs are not permitted.
- Must be covered by the sign owner's public liability – up to \$10 million.
- Must not unreasonably obstruct movement across a footpath, to a doorway or property access.
- Must not obstruct safe sight distances.
- Must be securely fixed or weighted down.
- Must be removed when the business is closed.
- Must not be permanently attached.
- Must not be located so as to obstruct other signage or clustered.
- Flag signs and teardrop banners are limited to two signs per premises.
- Vertical flag signs and tear drop banners are not permitted under an awning.
- Flag signs mounted on a horizontal or 45 degree pole must maintain a vertical clearance of 2000mm from the footpath surface.
- A frame and T frame signs (sandwich boards) are limited to one sign per premises and must comply with the Design Guidelines and Location Guidelines below

#### **Design Guidelines – A Frame & T Frame as illustrated in Figure 1 below.**

- Dimensions must conform with Figure 2 below.
- The sign is to contain no moving or spinning parts.
- The sign is to contain no offensive words or images.
- The sign shall not have reflecting or mirrored finishes (they are difficult to read and may reflect light into the eyes of drivers).
- The sign must be sufficiently weighted to ensure stability. The sign cannot be affixed to street furniture or anything else.
- All corners of the sign must be chamfered or rounded.
- Irregular shaped signs will be permitted but the size must be within the size range outlined above, and there must be no sharp edges or corners (See Figure 3 below).
- All signs less than 500mm wide must have a suitable base that provides adequate stability.

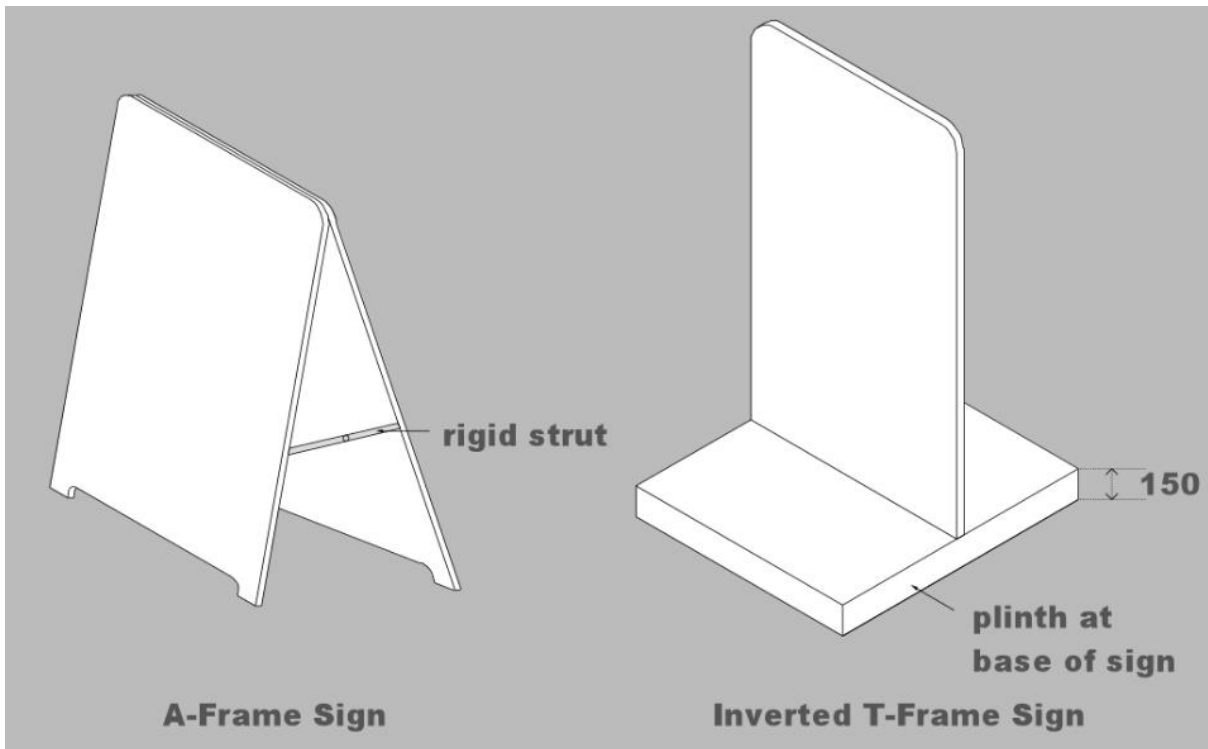


Figure 1: form of A and T Frame Signs

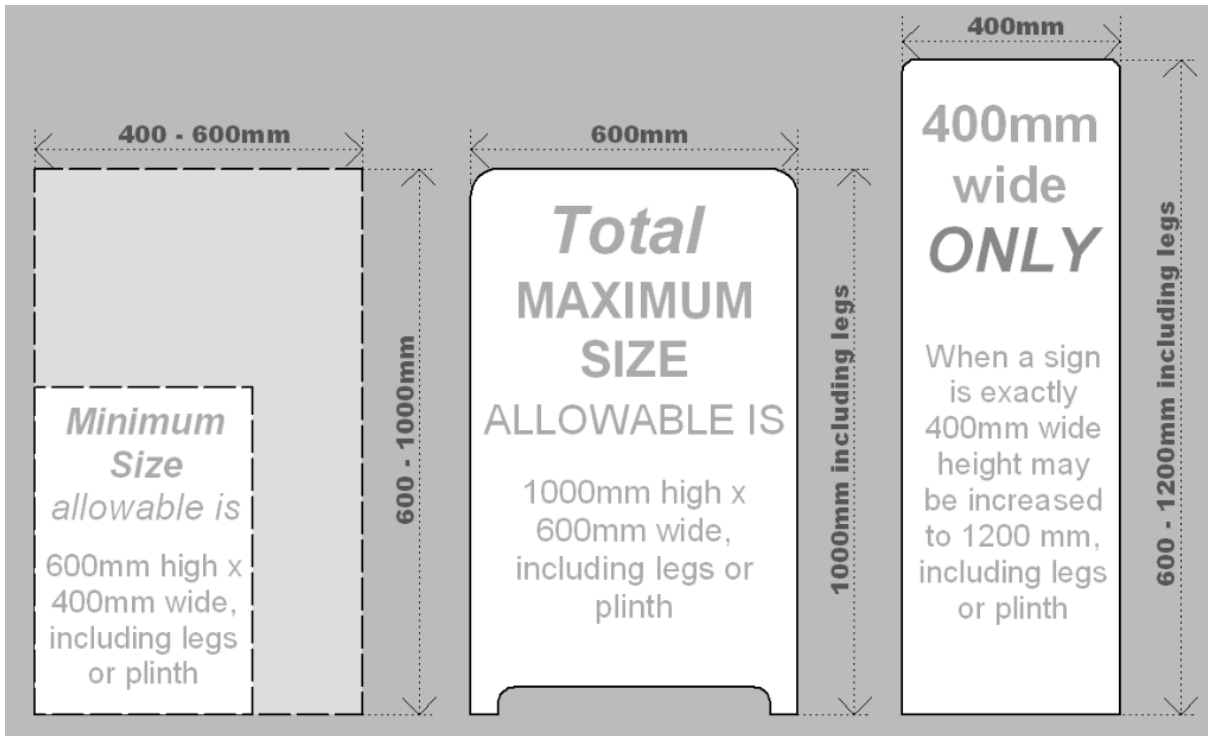


Figure 2: acceptable sign dimensions.

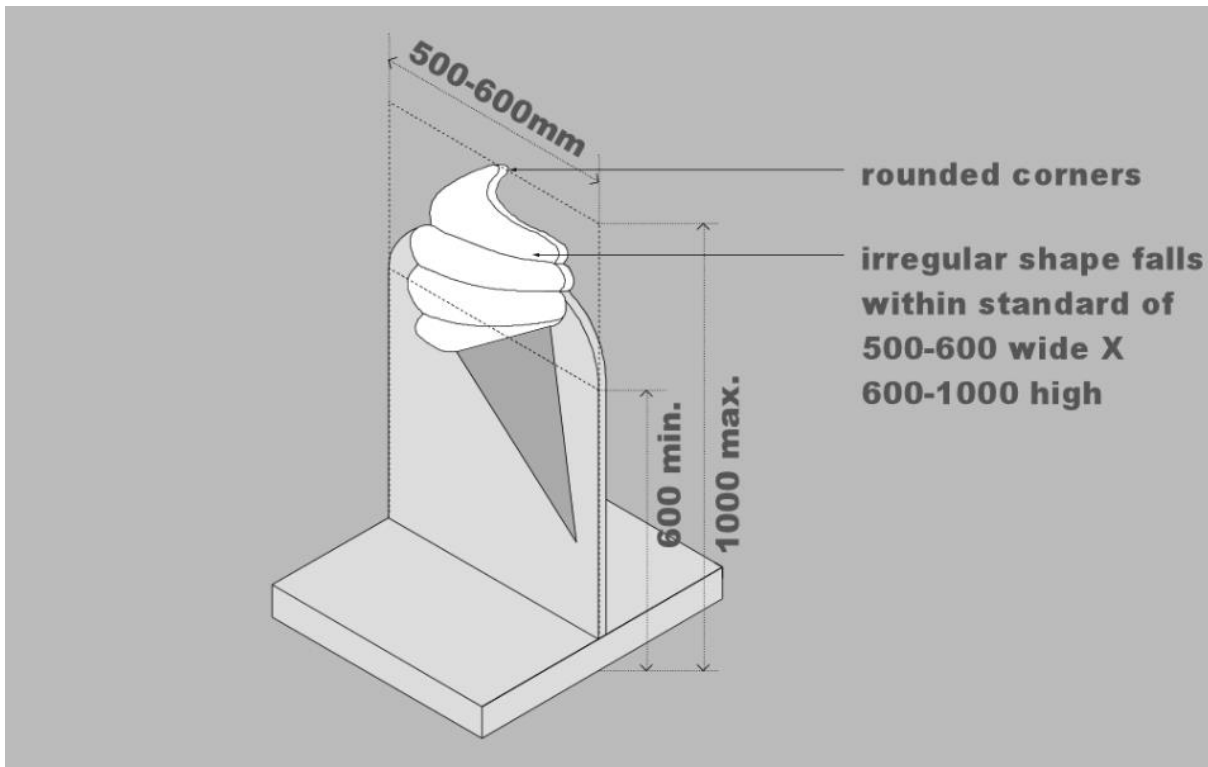


Figure 3: irregular shaped signs.

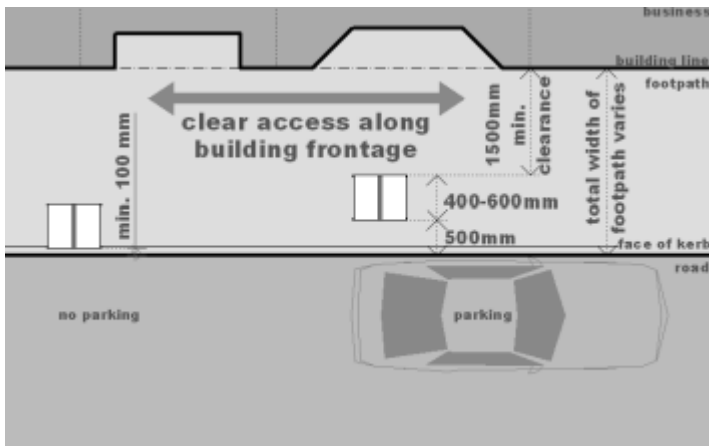
**Location Guidelines:**

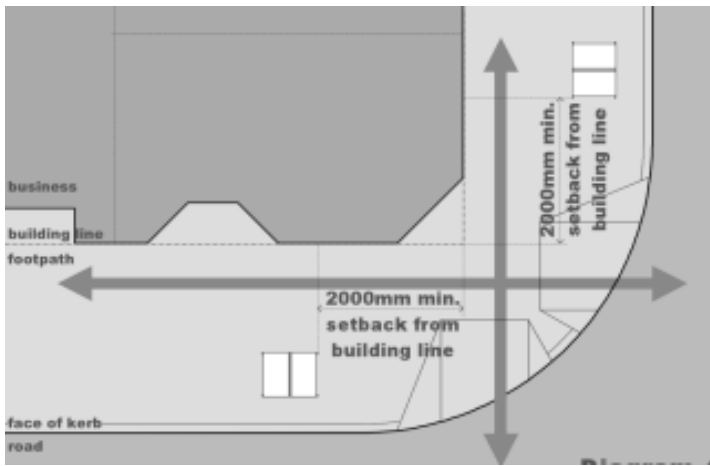
Signs are to be located with a minimum of 1.5m between the wall and sign to maximize pedestrian utility of undercover walkways.

Signs are to be setback a minimum of 500mm from the curb adjacent to designated parking areas and in certain specific instances as directed and approved by Council.

For corner lots, signs must be a minimum of 2m from a continuation of the building line.

Signs are not to be located in garden beds or planted nature strips.





### Temporary Event Signage

Council permits the erection of temporary event signs in the Council Road reserve, provided they comply with the following:

- Erected no more than 3 weeks prior to the event.
- Signage must not occupy a space greater than 3m<sup>2</sup>
- Maximum height of 1.5m above ground level.
- Removed within 1 week after the event.
- No more than 3 signs per event are to be erected on Council land.
- Must be covered by the sign owner's public liability – up to \$10 million.
- Unless located in a pre-approved location, written advice must be sought from General Manager regarding the specific sign, suitability of the location and method of erection/attachment prior to erection.

### Finger Board Signs

Council permits the erection of fingerboard signs in Council Road Reserves and on Council sign posts for the following purposes:

- Street names
- Directional signs for community uses and facilities such as toilets, parking lots, recreation facilities, schools, churches, community club buildings etc
- Tourist attractions
- Rural activities such as stud farms, plant nurseries, vineyards etc in obscure locations.
- Shopping centres, industrial precincts and entertainment precincts but not individual businesses in urban areas.
- A maximum of 2 fingerboards may be approved. Signage will not be erected on all approaches nor on every intersection. Care must be taken by the applicant to identify intersections where signage will be of the greatest assistance.
- A maximum of three fingerboards of any type, pointing in the same direction are to be signed at the one location.

Finger board signs must be consistent with the Tasmanian Visitor Information System and comply with the Tasmanian Roadside Signs Manual.

The erection of finger post signs directing persons to individual private businesses shall not be permitted within urban areas, except where directing tourists to recognised tourist attractions and accommodation.

All fingerboard signs must comply with the relevant Australian Standard AS1742.5.

### Sponsorship Signage at Sportsgrounds and other Community Facilities.

Council permits the erection of sponsorship signage associated with a club or community group on Council owned and managed land, such as sporting facilities.

A Sponsorship sign on Council land must:

- Be associated with and in accordance with a user agreement between Council and the relevant community group or sporting club;
- Be located on land to which the agreement applies;
- Demonstrate that the sign is related to financial or in kind sponsorship of a local community group, sporting club or non-for profit which uses the land.
- Be consistent with any Council endorsed sponsorship sign program or guidelines applicable to the land;
- Be focused internally and not intended to be visible directly from public roads.

Council reserves the right to implement a sponsorship signage program to regulate the dimension and placement of signage on sportsgrounds or any other Council land.

#### Non-compliant Existing Signs

Any permanent sign existing in the road reserve at the effective date of the policy (1<sup>st</sup> July 2025) is considered to be a non-compliant existing sign. The following applies to non-compliant existing signs on Council land:

- a) a non-compliant existing sign may be replaced, provided it does not increase in height, dimensions or form and remains associated with the same business.
- b) A non-compliant sign immediately adjacent the premises to which it relates may be reused by subsequent businesses.
- c) A non-compliant sign that is remotely located, and not adjacent to the premises to which it relates, is not to be used by subsequent businesses nor to be used by a different business and is to be removed.
- d) A non-compliant sign associated with a property that is vacant for an extended period will be removed and will not be available to subsequent businesses.
- e) A non-compliant existing sign does not establish a precedent for further non-compliant signs.

Any portable sign existing in the road reserve at the effective date of the policy (1<sup>st</sup> July 2025) is considered to be a non-compliant existing sign. The following applies to portable non-compliant existing signs on Council land:

- a) A portable non-compliant existing sign that does not comply with the above design criteria may continue to be used for the life of the sign, however, portable signs must be repositioned, such that they comply with all applicable standards relating to access and safety.
- b) Any portable non-compliant existing sign that poses a risk to safety is to be removed at the direction of Council.
- c) A portable non compliant existing sign does not provide a right in perpetuity. Should replacement of the signs be required, they are to be replaced with portable signs that are consistent with the guidelines for permitted signs, with respect to both form and location.

It is the responsibility of the sign owner to demonstrate the sign was in use prior to the commencement of this policy.

Any land owned by the Council, but subject to a formal commercial lease agreement is to be treated as private property and is not subject to this policy. The regulations of the Tasmanian Planning Scheme will continue to regulate the types of advertising signage permitted.

#### **Council Supported Signage Programs**

This policy does not prohibit the development and implementation of a signage program initiated and managed by Council or another entity approved by Council, which may

incorporate private business directories, individual private signs or wayfinding, provided such a program intends:

- equitable access to signage opportunities; and
- requires design consistency to ensure maintenance of public amenity; or
- includes a commercial lease agreement and financial compensation at a market rate.

### **Removal of Signs from Council Land**

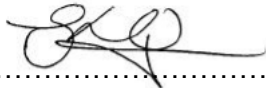
Issues associated with signs cannot always be foreseen. The above notwithstanding, as the land owner/manager, Council reserves the right to prohibit and remove any sign on Council land, at any time, that:

- Does not have the necessary consent of the General Manager;
- Does not comply with the applicable standards outlined above;
- Obstructs access to a building or public facility;
- Causes an unreasonable risk to pedestrians or vehicle traffic;
- Displays inappropriate images or messages that are inconsistent with Council's values, community expectations or are not in the public interest.
- Is of a political, protesting, disparaging or offensive nature that is deemed by the General Manager to be at odds with Council's values, policies or decisions or negatively impacts upon Council's reputation.
- Is not maintained in an acceptable condition.

## **9. IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW OF POLICY**

Implementation of this Policy rests with the General Manager. This Policy will be reviewed in 2 years initially and every four years thereafter or in accordance with legislative requirements.

A review of any George Town Council policy may occur out of cycle at any time.



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Shane Power  
**GENERAL MANAGER**

.....29/4/2025.....

**DATE**