



# Borough of Queenscliffe

## Tourist and Services Signage

### INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

#### INTRODUCTION

Tourist and services signs play an important role in attracting and guiding visitors to tourist-oriented regions, precincts and businesses; and to community facilities. As the economic importance of the tourism industry has grown, so too has the number of tourist-related enterprises and the number of signs displayed identifying them.

The proliferation of signs, particularly in areas of environmental or cultural heritage significance, not only detracts from the appearance of the locality but also diminishes the effectiveness of individual signs.

This information sheet is available to any business in the Borough considering an application to Council and outlines a set of requirements and principles used by Council to determine the eligibility of any application. Information regarding the application and approval process is also included.

#### SIGNAGE AND ROADWAYS IN THE BOROUGH

The first consideration is to determine the authority for approval, which relates to the road location for the sign:

1. VicRoads is the coordinating road authority for the Bellarine Highway (B110), Point Lonsdale Road (C127) and Lawrence Road (C128). An application for any form of signage for these roads must be made through VicRoads, using an application form and guidebook available online: [www.vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au)
2. The Borough is the road authority responsible for signs displayed in all other road reserves throughout the Borough. The Queenscliffe Planning Scheme contains provisions that effectively control signage on private and public land. However, a planning permit is not required to erect tourist or direction signage in a road reserve. Instead, the written consent of the Borough (as coordinating road authority) is required under the *Road Management Act 2004*.

#### STATEWIDE AND NATIONAL GUIDELINES

Please note that Tourism Victoria and VicRoads have published *Tourist Signing Guidelines* aimed at providing a consistent application of tourist and services signs across the State. The document provides detailed eligibility criteria, design standards and guidelines for location. The clear aim of these guidelines is to provide a unified, logical system of tourist and services signing that will improve the effectiveness of the sign network and enhance the image of tourist areas.

In addition, all signs must also comply with the relevant Australian Standards published in AS 1742, *Manual of uniform traffic control devices*.

There are also model eligibility guidelines and other guides published by the National Tourism Signing Reference Group.

•MUNICIPAL OFFICES: 50 Learmonth Street Queenscliff •CORRESPONDENCE: PO Box 93, Queenscliff 3225  
•GENERAL ENQUIRIES: (03) 5258 1377 •FACSIMILE: (03) 5258 3315 •OFFICE HOURS: 9.00 am - 4.00 pm  
•EMAIL: [info@queenscliffe.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@queenscliffe.vic.gov.au) •INTERNET: [www.queenscliffe.vic.gov.au](http://www.queenscliffe.vic.gov.au) •ABN: 47 294 157 406

## SIGN TYPES

There are four types for signs used across the Victorian road network.

*Arterial direction signs:* White legend on green background. Includes route numbers where they have been assigned and standard symbols, where relevant. These signs are managed by VicRoads.

*Tourist signs:* White legend on brown background. May include standard tourist attraction symbols.

*Services signs:* White legend on blue background. May include standard services symbols. Can be combined with tourist signs.

*Community facility signs:* White legend on blue background. Fingerboard style signs, mounted on a single post. These signs are generally managed by Council.

The following table indicates if a sign should be a brown tourist sign or a blue services sign:

Tourist signs (brown)	Services signs (blue)
Wineries	Accommodation
Industry-based attractions, eg factories, manufacturing plants, agricultural operations with guided tours	Sporting facilities, including golf clubs, swimming pools, bowling clubs, sports fields, stadia, racecourses
Museums	Religious venues
Art galleries and craft centres	Educational institutions – kindergartens, schools, universities, colleges, TAFEs
Antique galleries	Shopping centres and markets
Theatres and concert halls	Post offices
Zoos	Town halls, civic centres, municipal offices
Places with guided tours	Police stations, court houses
Historic properties and buildings	Airports / airfields
Geographic features	Libraries
Scenic lookouts	Cemeteries
Parks and gardens	Restaurants and refreshments
Nurseries and garden centres with tourist facilities	Train and bus stations
	Parking, including rest areas
	Convention centres
	Hospitals and medical facilities
	Toilets
	Municipal depots, tips and transfer stations

## CONSIDERATION OF AN APPLICATION

The Borough must apply all state and national guidelines in considering any application. The information below is provided to assist applicants.

### CRITERIA USED BY COUNCIL TO ASSESS EACH APPLICATION

In the first instance, Council must use a set of criteria identified in the VicRoads publication *Tourist Signing Guidelines* to assess each application. See: [www.vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au) for the full guide.

The following table from the guide (p54) provides a set of 'essential' criteria for signage relating to tourist attractions.

## **9.2 Criteria for Tourist Attraction Signing**

### **9.2.1 Essential Criteria**

In order to qualify for tourist attraction signing, as set out in sections 4.2 and 4.3, a tourist attraction (other than a natural feature) must satisfy all of the following essential criteria. The attraction must:

- (a) have tourism as a Core Business Activity (see Glossary of Terms—Appendix A).
- (b) provide a substantive tourism experience in addition to, or as part of, any commercial/retail activity (see Glossary of Terms—Appendix A);
- (c) have all relevant State and local government licences and approvals to operate as a tourist attraction, including health, planning and parking requirements;
- (d) be open to the public without prior booking during the attraction's normal opening hours;
- (e) be open on weekends and at least three other days of the week, plus public and school holidays;
- (f) be open for a minimum of 7 hours per day on the days the attraction is open;
- (g) be listed on the database of the nearest accredited Visitor Information Centre (with opening hours, admission prices, location and directions);
- (h) promote the location and clear directions to the attraction to visitors from outside the local area ;
- (i) be appropriately signed within the property line so that it is easily identifiable by passing motorists;
- (j) have appropriately trained visitor contact staff; and
- (k) maintain a record of visitor numbers and comments.

Please note that the guide also outlines 'desired criteria' and a set of more specific criteria for a range of attraction types: for example galleries, wineries and museums.

The VicRoads guides also outlines a set of criteria relating to accommodation (p. 58). Requirements differ for rural and urban areas. Some criteria are outlined in the table below and further criteria for specific types of accommodation: for example caravan parks, motels and farm stays are outlined in the guide.

### **9.3.3 Criteria for Tourist Accommodation Signing**

To be eligible for tourist accommodation signing, accommodation facilities must:

#### **Essential:**

- (a) hold all relevant State and Local Government licences and any other appropriate consents;
- (b) be open daily;
- (c) be available for casual accommodation (prior booking not required);
- (d) be open to the general public (i.e. not exclusively for coach tours or other organised groups);
- (e) be listed on the database of the nearest accredited Visitor Information Centre (with opening hours, admission prices, location and directions);
- (f) promote the location and clear directions to the facility to visitors from outside the local area;
- (g) be appropriately signed within the property line so that the facility is easily identifiable by passing motorists; and
- (h) have appropriately trained visitor contact staff.

#### **Desirable:**

- (i) be a member of a recognised Local, Regional or peak sector tourism organisation and/or be accredited under a scheme approved by the Tourism Accreditation Board of Victoria.

Finally, requirements for restaurants are noted in the guide (p59)

### **9.4 Criteria for Restaurants**

To be eligible for signing, restaurants must:

- be located outside the built up area;
- meet essential criteria (a) & (d) of section 9.3.3;
- provide full table service;
- be open at least 6 days per week; and
- offer regional and/or local produce as part of the visitor experience.

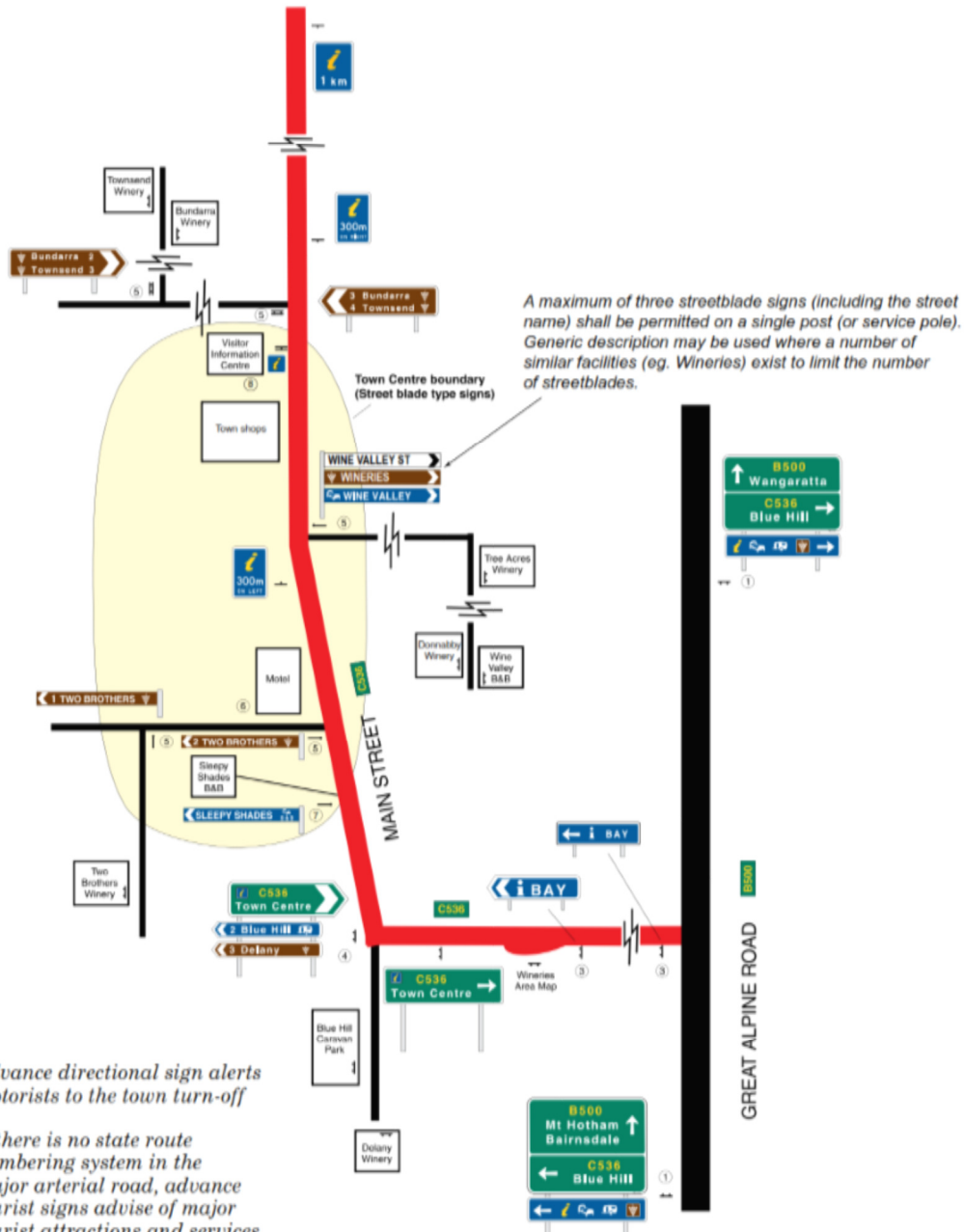
Eligibility for service signs generally relates to the benefit of the signs to visitors. The table below is used by Borough staff to assess all applications for service signs.

Type of service or community facility	Permitted	Permitted where primary purpose is to serve visitors	Discouraged
Aged care facility			✓
Art gallery		✓	
Barbecue (public)			✓
Boat ramp/jetty	✓		
Cemetery		✓	
Community service			✓
Emergency service	✓		
Ferry	✓		
Golf course		✓	
Library		✓	
Medical centre		✓	
Museum		✓	
Parking areas (public)	✓		
Picnic facilities			✓
Place of assembly		✓	
Place of worship	✓		
Post office	✓		
Railway station	✓		
Recreation centre		✓	
School			✓
Service station			✓
Surf life-saving club	✓		
Toilets (public)	✓		
Tourist information bay	✓		
Town hall/municipal offices	✓		
Visitor information centres (accredited)	✓		
Visitor radio services			✓
Yacht club		✓	

Finally, consideration of every application must take into account an overall signage scheme across the Borough – see the map below from the VicRoads guide.

## Sample of Signing Scheme

### Wine and Art Township of Blue Hill (fictitious)



1. Advance directional sign alerts motorists to the town turn-off
2. If there is no state route numbering system in the major arterial road, advance tourist signs advise of major tourist attractions and services available in Blue Hill, using generic words and symbols.
3. Signing for information bay, where the names and locations of Blue Hill wineries are displayed. It is located where motorists can pull off the road to read it.
4. Major intersection sign. Smaller signs erected underneath are the final direction indicators for properties located to the left of the intersection.
5. Blue Hill's wineries and B&Bs are signed at the final point of direction using streetblades within the township and on larger chevron signs elsewhere.
6. The Blue Hill Motel is not eligible for a specific name sign because the motel is signed generically (ie. bed symbol) from the highway and because its property signing is adequate once motorists have entered the main street.
7. Although also located on the main street, Sleepy Shades B&B is eligible for a small streetblade sign because it is not obvious to the passing motorist.
8. The accredited Visitor Information Centre has been signed generically from the highway and is highly visible from the main street.

## PRINCIPLES OF GOOD DIRECTION SIGNING

A further consideration is the design of the sign. The fundamental principles<sup>1</sup> behind good directional signing are:

### **#1 Focus on the users**

Directional signs are provided to help people find their way safely; not to promote local businesses.

Focussing on users' needs, rather than those of signage providers, is paramount for a good wayfinding system. Although there are pressures to sign to destinations based on perceived commercial advantage, attracting tourist numbers or keeping vested interest groups happy, these are not good reasons for determining what will be signed. The prime objective is to help people to navigate when they are unfamiliar with the area or uncertain of their route.

### **#2 Keep it simple**

Simplicity is vital for safety and effectiveness. For information to be useful to the motorist, it should be clear, concise and unambiguous. Drivers should not have to take their eyes off the road for more than a second to read and understand the signs in their field of view.

### **#3 Reduce clutter**

Redundant, out-of-date and competing signage should be removed to provide clarity, consistency and readability.

### **#4 Disclose information progressively**

At each point, the user should be given enough information to achieve the next stage of their journey, but not so much that they become confused. Providing the right information at the right point along a journey helps the visitor make simple, efficient decisions.

### **#5 Provide continuity and consistency**

Signing to destinations should be continuous and consistent along a route.

Once a destination is listed on a direction sign, it should appear with the same name at every turn until that destination is reached. If there is no sign at an intersection, the user will assume that they continue straight ahead. Continuity of signing is essential as users expect that once they start to follow the direction on a sign, the signage system will provide a clearly marked path leading to the destination.

Each destination should have a consistent and unambiguous name. It should not be called one thing on one sign then a different thing on another sign. The name should also closely match the name shown on maps and collateral material.

The same symbol should be used consistently for the same meaning. Consistent use leads to greater understanding.

### **#6 Design for legibility**

Ensure that all direction signs are legible for a driver passing at the speed limit. This becomes more important as the population is ageing. Standard fonts should always be used.

### **#7 Improve visual amenity**

Signs are unlikely to ever be regarded as an enhancement to the aesthetics of a rural environment. However, the design and placement should try to minimise the visual impact. While the sign content needs to be large enough to be legible to a passing motorist, the overall sign size should not be grandiose within the visual landscape. Old and faded signs should be removed or replaced. Where there are multiple signs of a similar type at a location, they should be of a harmonious design.

---

<sup>1</sup> Modified from MVSCC draft Master Style Guide

Other design considerations include:

Tourist signs, services signs and community facility signs within the Borough should not indicate distances.

Where practicable, smaller signs should:

- be located on existing power poles or street sign poles
- if located on the same structure, always be positioned below the street name sign
- match as closely as possible the shape and dimensions of existing signs located on the same structure
- be double-sided and positioned so as to be visible from two directions.

Services and community facilities signs should not be displayed in circumstances where the entrance to the service or facility is readily visible to persons travelling in vehicles along the road.

Where practical, tourist, services and community facility signs should display standard symbols instead of words.

Tourist, services and community facility signs should only be displayed where it can be demonstrated that the venue is regularly used by tourists or visitors who are unfamiliar with the Borough. Applicants may have to provide documentary evidence to establish this.

#### HERITAGE AND AMENITY

In considering any application, the Borough must also remain conscious to balance the needs of traffic management and road safety with the potential impact of the sign on the scenic, environmental and cultural heritage characteristics of the locality.

In general, this involves focussing on:

- reducing the number of signs on display to the minimum number acceptable according to reasonable traffic management and safety standards
- minimising the amount of information displayed within the range of applicable standards
- ensuring that signs are located and installed in a manner that is sensitive to the immediate context.

In areas on or adjacent to the coast or coastal reserves, consideration should be given to the *Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast* (1998).

#### MAKING AN APPLICATION

Having considered the likely eligibility, the sign type, design requirements and heritage considerations you most likely have the information required to make an application to Council for a tourist or services sign.

The application form is available on Council's website.

The costs involved include:

- The application fee of \$60 (single sign) or \$120 (for two or more signs) - this fee is to cover the costs of assessment only and is not refundable if the application is unsuccessful
- The costs of design and installation - currently estimated as \$250 for a finger board.

An application can be made at any time and may take up to four weeks for a determination.