

ELECTION SIGNS POLICY

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear and consistent guidance for the placement of election signs within the Buller District and to highlight the requirements of Te Tai o Poutini Plan, electoral legislation, and other relevant statutory requirements.

1.2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all candidates, political parties, campaign organisers, and any person placing election signs within the Buller District for:

- Local authority elections;
- Parliamentary elections;
- By-elections; and
- Referendums.

This policy does not replace any requirements under legislation, Te Tai o Poutini Plan, council bylaws or approvals required from other agencies.

1.3 BACKGROUND

Election signage is an important means of political expression and community engagement. This policy provides election specific guidance to assist the community, candidates and political parties to understand Council's expectations and the requirements of other agencies.

1.4 PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on the following principles:

- Election signs are a legitimate form of political expression and democratic participation.
- Candidates and political parties are responsible for complying with all applicable legislative and planning requirements.
- Council will provide clear, fair, and consistent information regarding election sign requirements.

2 POLICY

2.1 COMPLIANCE WITH OTHER REQUIREMENTS

All election signs must comply with:

- Te Tai o Poutini Plan;

- The Electoral Act 1993 and any related regulations and legislation;
- The Local Electoral Act 2001;
- Any applicable bylaws; and
- Any requirements of NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi.

Compliance with this policy does not remove the need to comply with any other legal requirements.

2.2 DISPLAY PERIOD

Election signs may only be displayed during the period permitted by the applicable electoral legislation and planning rules.

<https://westcoast.isoplan.co.nz/eplan/rules/0/231/0/0/0/99>

<https://elections.nz/guidance-and-rules/advertising-and-campaigning/election-signs>

2.3 LANDOWNER CONSENT

Election signs may only be erected with the permission of the landowner or occupier.

Candidates and political parties are responsible for obtaining any required permissions before a sign is installed.

<https://bullerdc.govt.nz/media/lzbazmtg/control-of-advertising-signs-bylaw.pdf>

2.4 COUNCIL-CONTROLLED LAND

Election signs are not permitted on Council-controlled land, including parks, reserves, road reserves and other public spaces, unless expressly authorised by Council.

Council may identify approved locations for the display of election signs on specified Council-controlled land from time to time.

<https://bullerdc.govt.nz/media/lzbazmtg/control-of-advertising-signs-bylaw.pdf>

2.5 STATE HIGHWAYS

Election signs located on, adjacent to, or visible from a State Highway must comply with the requirements of NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi.

Where approval from NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi is required, that approval must be obtained before the sign is erected.

<https://nzta.govt.nz/resources/requirements-for-general-election-signage-on-or-near-state-highways>

<https://nzta.govt.nz/resources/third-party-signs-on-state-highways>

2.6 PROMOTER STATEMENTS

All election signs must display the promoter statement where required by electoral legislation.

The promoter is responsible for ensuring that election signs comply with all electoral advertising requirements.

<https://elections.nz/guidance-and-rules/advertising-and-campaigning/election-signs>

2.7 COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIANCE

Complaints regarding election signs should be directed to Buller District Council or, in the case of signs relating to the State Highway network, the NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi.

Where a sign is found to be non-compliant, Council will require the sign to be modified, relocated, or removed within a specified time period.

Failure to comply within the specified time period may result in enforcement action under the relevant legislation, in which case enforcement costs may apply.

<https://bullerdc.govt.nz/media/lzbazmtg/control-of-advertising-signs-bylaw.pdf>

3 RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

- Te Tai o Poutini Plan <https://westcoast.isoplan.co.nz/eplan/rules/0/231/0/0/0/99>
- Buller District Council Control of Advertising Signs Bylaw (under review)
<https://bullerdc.govt.nz/media/lzbazmtg/control-of-advertising-signs-bylaw.pdf>
- Electoral Act 1993
<https://elections.nz/guidance-and-rules/advertising-and-campaigning/election-signs>
- Local Electoral Act 2001
<https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2001/35/en/latest/#DLM93301>

4 MONITORING

Council's Regulatory Services Group will monitor compliance with this policy and investigate complaints regarding election signs.

5 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier if required by legislative change, electoral reform, or operational experience.

6. DEFINITIONS

Candidate

Means a person seeking election to a local authority, Parliament, or any other office subject to an election or by-election.

Council

Means Buller District Council.

Council-Controlled Land

Means any land owned, administered, managed, or controlled by Council, including parks, reserves, road reserves, public open spaces, Council facilities, and other public places.

Election Sign

Means any sign, billboard, banner, poster, placard, flag, display, or similar advertising device that falls within the definition of electoral advertising.

Electoral Advertising

Means advertising regulated under the Electoral Act 1993, Local Electoral Act 2001, or any other applicable electoral legislation.

Landowner Consent

Means the permission of the legal owner, occupier, or person authorised to grant approval for the placement of a sign on land or a structure.

Political Party

Means a political party registered under the Electoral Act 1993.

Polling Day

Means the day appointed under the relevant electoral legislation for voting in an election, by-election, or referendum.

Promoter

Means the person or organisation responsible for an election advertisement and required by law to be identified on that advertisement.

Referendum

Means a poll of eligible voters conducted under an Act of Parliament or other lawful authority to determine support for a proposal or question.

Road Reserve

Means land legally designated or vested for road purposes, including the carriageway, berms, footpaths, and associated transport infrastructure.

State Highway

Means a road declared to be a state highway under the Land Transport Management Act 2003 and administered by NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi.

Te Tai o Poutini Plan

Means the operative combined district plan for the West Coast Region prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991, including any amendments or successor documents.

NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA)

Means the Crown entity responsible for managing New Zealand's state highway network and undertaking its functions under transport legislation.

Document History

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17/07/2026	Created by the Senior Policy Advisor
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