

Outdoor Advertising Signage Policy



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Planning and Urban Management Agency
Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Meteorology

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1 PREAMBLE

This policy applies to all developments of advertising structures on land in Samoa. This policy has been prepared to provide government authorities, public and private developers, designers and property owners some assistance to determine appropriate signage that will improve the streetscapes and landscapes in Samoa.

2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide for the orderly display of signs in Samoa.
- Enable permanent and temporary signs to be erected, maintained and removed in a way that mitigates adverse environmental effects.
- Ensure that signs do not pose a threat to community health and safety, and the safe and efficient functioning of the road network.
- Mitigate the adverse visual effects of a sign/s on amenity values of the surrounding area.

3 POLICY

It is policy to:

- Provide opportunities for advertising signs in specific areas in Samoa.
- Encourage signage that respects the character of an area and avoids visual clutter.
- Determine development consent applications for signs that comply with the requirements and performance standards of the Outdoor Advertising Signage Policy (Refer to Clause 4 and 5 for detail of this).



Figure 1: Vailima Breweries at Vaitele
An appropriate wall sign in an industrial area.

4 APPLICATION OF POLICY

The method used to achieve the policies identified is to provide planning guidelines by way of overarching general requirements and specific objectives and performance standards for all categories of signs.

4.1 General Requirements

Please note that sign construction and maintenance must be consistent with the Building Code (1992).

Before deciding on any application for an outdoor advertising sign, in addition to advancing the objectives of the Planning Urban Management Act (2004) and assessing the application against the specific objectives and performance standards of the individual category of sign, the responsible authority must consider the following:

- The effect of the sign on the amenity of the area including the need to avoid visual disorder or clutter of signs.
- The effect of the sign on the built environment or the landscape, with particular thought to its effect on any objects of scenic, historic, architectural, scientific or cultural interest.
- The effect of the sign on natural airflow or sunlight to a residential allotment.
- The sustainable use of resources in the construction and lighting of signage.
- The construction and maintenance of the sign in order to limit any danger to people or property (i.e. wind resistance).
- The proposed use of landscaping around the sign to soften its impact and appearance.

4.2 Specific Requirements

In addition to meeting the overarching general requirements, the provisions of this policy contain specific requirements for each individual category of sign. These requirements need to be considered as part of the development application and consent process. The specific requirements are broken into the following categories:

- Objectives:
An objective describes the desired outcome to be achieved by the completed outdoor advertising signage.
- Performance standards:
A standard contains the specific requirements to meet the objective. A standard should normally be met. However, if the consent authority is satisfied that an application for an alternative design solution meets the objective, the alternative design solution may be considered.

A development application for an outdoor advertising sign:

- Must meet all of the specific objectives relevant to the individual category of sign contained within this policy.
- Should strive to meet all of the specific performance standards relevant to the individual category of sign contained within this policy.

4.3 Definitions

For the purposes of the application of this policy, the following definitions will be applied to delineate individual land use categories:

- **Urban residential area** refers to an area that is primarily used for residential purposes (with less than 10% commercial/industrial uses).
- **Commercial area** refers to areas predominantly consisting of retail, office, entertainment, tourism and other non-industrial businesses.
- **Industrial area** refers to an area predominantly consisting of manufacturing, distribution, storage and other businesses with the ability to negatively affect residential amenity.
- **Rural area** refers to the areas outside of greater Apia (VAIMAUGA, FALEATA), Salelologa (FAASALELE'AGA) that are primarily agricultural or undeveloped areas (less than 10% residential/commercial/industrial uses).
- **Main Road Corridor** refers to major road corridors in Samoa. These include: Cross Island Road, East Coast Road, West Coast Road, Beach Road, Vaitele street, Ifiifi Street, South Coast Road, West Coast Road in Upolu, and Main South Coast Road, Main North Coast Road, Falealupo Road, Vaiaata Road in Savaii.
- **Environmentally sensitive area** refers to the ocean and non-ocean side of coastal roads, beaches and foreshore areas, wetlands/mangroves, coastal hazard zones, parks and reserves and areas with exceptional view lines.

5 DEVELOPMENT CONSENT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

An application to erect, install or display advertising signage must include two (2) copies of plans drawn to scale to be submitted to Planning and Urban Management Agency with completed Development Consent Application Forms. Submitted plans should include the following level of detail:

- The location of the proposed sign on the site or building and distance from property. Include property boundaries and nearest roads.
- The dimensions, height above ground level and extent of projection of the proposed sign.
- Details of any form of illumination.
- The colour, content, lettering style and materials of the proposed sign.
- Landscaping details if applicable.
- The structure of the sign and method of support.
- The location and size of existing signage on the site including details of any signs to be retained or removed.
- Endorsement by owner of land and all appropriate public utilities, government corporations and authorities.

5.1 *Development consent assessment matters*

When assessing an application for any sign that requires a Development Consent under section 6 of the PUM Act, and considering appropriate conditions, the Planning and Urban Management Agency will have regard to, but will not be restricted by, the matters set out below:

- The extent to which the general and specific requirements of this policy have been met.

5.2 *Building Permit Matters*

Application for outdoor advertising signage must comply with the relevant provisions of the National Building Code and will require a permit for structural works, in addition to a development consent.



6 URBAN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

6.1 Specific Requirements

Objectives:

The following objectives relate to all applications for development of advertising signs in residential areas:

- Limit outdoor advertising signs in residential areas where possible.
- Provide the opportunity for unobtrusive signs to be located in residential areas while minimising the visual impact on the prevailing and valued amenity and character of that area.
- Encourage signs that are of a respectful/reasonable scale and do not dominate the residential setting.
- Encourage the use of colours and materials in signage that demonstrate appropriate regard to the character and amenity of the area.
- Encourage the introduction of landscaping to assist in softening the appearance of the sign and to minimise its overall visual impact.
- Applications for signs for commercial uses in residential areas will be permitted and should use the requirement in section 7.1 as a guide, however discretion will be applied given the above objectives for residential areas.

Performance standards:

Any application for an outdoor advertising sign in a residential area will be required to be consistent with the following standards in order to obtain a development consent:

SIGN	PERFORMANCE STANDARD
All signs require a permit in a residential area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The total area of the sign should not exceed a maximum 1.5m². ▪ A sign should not exceed a maximum height of 2.0m or if attached to a building the sign should be no higher than the highest point of the building. ▪ Signs on-site in residential areas should be limited to one (1) per parcel. ▪ Illumination of signs should be limited. ▪ Signs that have any electrical wiring must be covered and have public warning of the potential danger. ▪ Signs are discouraged from locating on walls facing residential uses or the entrance to residential streets unless the use is in a residential area and the sign is on the frontage of the site.
Billboards and Freestanding signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discourage billboards and freestanding signs in residential areas except on residential properties that face main road corridors. In this instance:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Freestanding signs should be oriented to be perpendicular to the street or frontage. ▪ Illuminate signs should be minimised where possible.
Temporary Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The sign must be of a religious, educational, cultural, political, social or recreational nature. ▪ Advertising of a commercial nature should be limited (except in the case of identifying sponsors naming rights). ▪ In terms of the use of a temporary sign for an event, a sign should not be displayed earlier than 28 days before the date of the event and should be removed within 14 days of the completion of the event (with the exception of election signs which may be erected up to 6 months prior to the election). ▪ Once the sign is removed the land should be returned to its original or an improved state.
Other signs (public amenity or facilities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signs on public amenities or facilities i.e. street furniture should not cover more than 25% of the facility.



Figure 3: Example of signage permissible in a residential area

7 COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL AREAS

7.1 Specific Requirements

Objectives:

The following objectives relate to all applications for development of advertising signs in commercial and industrial areas:

- Provide opportunities for appropriate outdoor advertising in commercial and industrial areas.
- Encourage signage that is appropriately sited and designed so as to minimise negative visual impacts.
- Ensure wall signs do not cover the architectural features or detailing of a building and should be sized in proportion with parapets, panels, windows and wall areas.
- Encourage signage that can add visual interest to an area, particularly in low amenity commercial and industrial environments, through high quality design and detail.
- Encourage the use of colours and materials in signage that demonstrate appropriate regard to the character and amenity of the area.
- Encourage the location of illuminate signs in commercial and industrial areas where negative off site amenity impacts can be managed.
- Encourage the sensitive design of signage in areas located adjacent to or opposite residential premises.

Performance standards:

Any application for an outdoor advertising sign in a commercial or industrial area will be required to be consistent with the following in order to obtain a development consent:

SIGN	PERFORMANCE STANDARD
All signs require a development consent in a commercial and industrial area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refer to standards for individual sign types as listed below
Business signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A business sign should not protrude more than 1m above the eaves of a building. ▪ In conjunction with other advertisements, a business sign should not exceed a maximum coverage of 50% of the premises. ▪ Signs are discouraged from locating on walls facing residential uses or the entrance to residential streets unless the use is in a residential area and the sign is on the frontage of the site.
Wall signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A wall sign should not exceed a maximum coverage of 25% of a total wall area.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signs are discouraged from locating on walls facing residential uses or the entrance to residential streets unless the use is in a residential area and the sign is on the frontage of the site.
Billboards (and other freestanding signs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should be located a minimum of 15m from a road sign or traffic control device. ▪ Discourage billboards or freestanding signs from locating within 20m from any road intersection. ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should be setback a minimum of 10m from any road. ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should not exceed a maximum area of 8m². ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should have a minimum 2m clearance above ground level and a maximum height of 6m. ▪ If a billboard or freestanding sign is located on land adjoining a main arterial route (see glossary), the sign shall be consistent with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On a 25 mph/ 40 kmph road a minimum distance of 70metres should be maintained between signs on the same side of the road. ▪ On a 35 mph/ 60 kmph road signs may be clustered in groups of three (located 1 metre apart) and a minimum distance of 90 metres should be maintained between the groups of signs on the same side of the road. ▪ Billboards should be designed in a manner that allows them to be taken down in the instance of severe storms or cyclone.
Projecting signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A projecting sign must not exceed 1.5m²
Real estate signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A real estate sign in a commercial area should not exceed a maximum size of 2.5m² ▪ A real estate sign should not be displayed for more than 14 days after the sale or letting of a property.
Illuminated signs (& animated signs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where illumination can be demonstrated to be necessary, consideration of surrounds must be given when determining hours of illumination. ▪ Illuminated signs will be discouraged on properties adjacent to residential lots. ▪ Signs that have any electrical wiring must be covered and have public warning of the potential danger.

<p>Temporary Signs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The sign must be of a religious, educational, cultural, political, social or recreational nature. ▪ Advertising of a commercial nature should be limited (except in the case of identifying sponsors naming rights). ▪ In terms of the use of a temporary sign for an event, a sign should not be displayed earlier than 28 days before the date of the event and should be removed within 14 days of the completion of the event (with the exception of election signs which may be erected up to 6 months prior to the election). ▪ Once the sign is removed the land should be returned to its original or an improved state.
<p>Other signs (public amenity or facilities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signs on public amenities or facilities i.e. street furniture should not cover more than 25% of the facility.

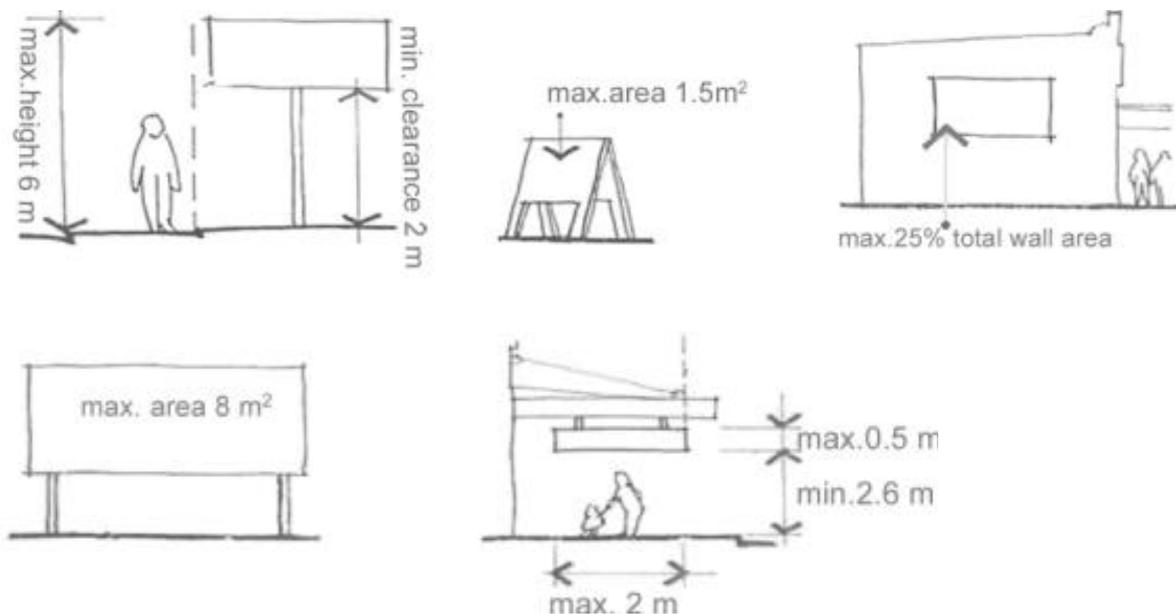


Figure 4: Example of signage permissible in a commercial/industrial area

8 RURAL AREAS

8.1 Specific Requirements

Objectives:

The following objectives relate to all applications for development of advertising signs in rural areas:

- Encourage the location of signs on rural properties on fences, buildings or other existing infrastructure.
- Where possible, discourage the location of freestanding signs and illuminated signs in rural areas.

Performance standards:

Any application for an outdoor advertising sign in a rural area will be required to be consistent with the following in order to obtain a permit:

SIGN	PERFORMANCE STANDARD
All signs require a permit in a rural and industrial area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Signs in rural areas should not exceed 1.5m² in area.▪ The height of signs in rural areas should not exceed 2m or if attached to a building no higher than the highest point of the building.▪ Signs in rural areas should be located on fences, buildings or other existing infrastructure.
Temporary Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The sign must be of a religious, educational, cultural, political, social or recreational nature.▪ Advertising of a commercial nature should be limited (except in the case of identifying sponsors naming rights).▪ In terms of the use of a temporary sign for an event, a sign should not be displayed earlier than 28 days before the date of the event and should be removed within 14 days of the completion of the event (with the exception of election signs which may be erected up to 6 months prior to the election).▪ Once the sign is removed the land should be returned to its original or an improved state.

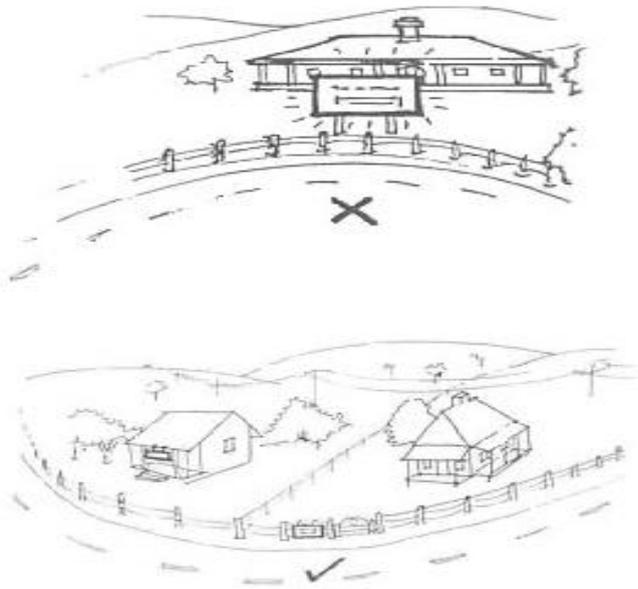


Figure 5: Example of signage permissible in a rural area

9 MAIN ROAD CORRIDOR AREAS

9.1 Specific Requirements

Objectives:

The following objectives relate to all applications for development of advertising signs in main road corridor areas:

- Ensure that signs do not create a safety hazard or potentially distract motorists or pedestrians through the type or level of illumination, colours or form of advertising.
- Ensure signs do not obscure a motorist's view of pedestrians and vice versa, or obscure views to nearby pedestrian and traffic signal facilities.
- Ensure that signs do not create a distraction or obstruction to road-users or pedestrian traffic.
- Discourage signs that obscure major view lines.
- Encourage signs that do not dominate the landscape or host buildings.
- Encourage signs that are in scale with their surroundings.
- Signs for identification or public awareness and safety purposes may be erected on the coastal side of ocean roads at the discretion of the Board.

Performance standards:

Any application for an outdoor advertising sign in a main road corridor area will be required to be consistent with the following in order to obtain a permit:

SIGN	PERFORMANCE STANDARD
All signs require a permit in a main road corridor area and all road reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Refer to standards for individual sign types as listed below</i>
Billboards and other Freestanding Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should be located a minimum of 15m from a road sign or traffic control device. ▪ Discourage billboards or freestanding signs from locating within 20m from any road intersection. ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should be setback a minimum of 10m from any road. ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should not exceed a maximum area of 8m². ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should have a minimum 2m clearance above ground level and a maximum height of 6m. ▪ If a billboard or freestanding sign is located on land adjoining a main arterial route (see glossary), the sign shall be consistent with the following:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On a 25 mph/ 40 kmph road a minimum distance of 70metres should be maintained between signs on the same side of the road. ▪ On a 35 mph/ 60 kmph road signs may be clustered in groups of three (located 1 metre apart) and a minimum distance of 90 metres should be maintained between the groups of signs on the same side of the road. ▪ Billboards should be designed in a manner that allows them to be taken down in the instance of severe storms or cyclone.
Illuminate signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where illumination can be demonstrated to be necessary, consideration of surrounds must be given when determining hours of illumination. ▪ Illuminated signs will be discouraged on properties adjacent to residential lots. ▪ Signs that have any electrical wiring must be covered and have public warning of any potential danger.
Temporary Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The sign must be of a religious, educational, cultural, political, social or recreational nature. ▪ Advertising of a commercial nature should be limited (except in the case of identifying sponsors naming rights). ▪ In terms of the use of a temporary sign for an event, a sign should not be displayed earlier than 28 days before the date of the event and should be removed within 14 days of the completion of the event (with the exception of election signs which may be erected up to 6 months prior to the election). ▪ Once the sign is removed the land should be returned to its original or an improved state.

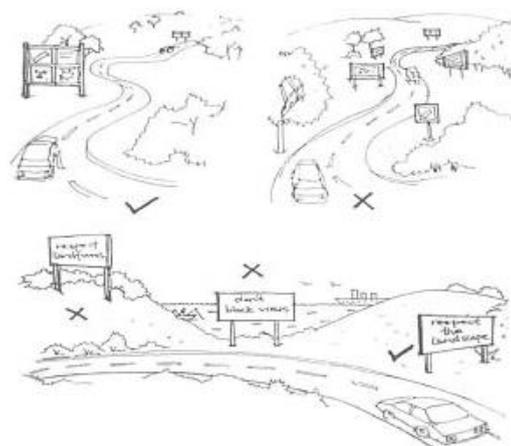


Figure 6: Example of signage permissible in a Main Road Corridor areas

10 ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

10.1 Specific Requirements

Objectives:

The following objectives relate to all applications for development of advertising signs in sensitive areas:

- Signs and billboards should be limited in sensitive environmental areas.
- It is preferable that billboards and freestanding signs in sensitive environmental areas are used for interpretive, public safety or educational purposes.
- Careful consideration of the location of signs and billboards to minimise negative impacts on view lines and amenity must be achieved in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Signs and billboards should not dominate the landscape in environmentally sensitive areas or silhouette above the existing dominant tree canopy.
- Signs and billboards should, where possible, incorporate colours and materials that are compatible with the existing character of an environmentally sensitive area.

Performance Standards:

Any application for an outdoor advertising sign in an environmentally sensitive area will be required to be consistent with the following in order to obtain a permit:

Section 1 Use	Permit required
All signs require a permit in an environmentally sensitive area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refer to standards for individual sign types as listed below
Billboards and Freestanding Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should be located a minimum of 15m from a road sign or traffic control device. ▪ Discourage billboards or freestanding signs from locating within 20m from any road intersection. ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should be setback a minimum of 10m from any road. ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should not exceed a maximum area of 4m². ▪ A billboard or freestanding sign should have a minimum 2m clearance above ground level and a maximum height of 6m. ▪ If a billboard or freestanding sign is located on land adjoining a main arterial route (see glossary), the sign shall be consistent with the following: ▪ If a billboard or freestanding sign is located on land adjoining a main arterial route (see glossary), the sign shall be consistent

	<p>with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On a 25 mph/ 40 kmph road a minimum distance of 70metres should be maintained between signs on the same side of the road. ▪ On a 35 mph/ 60 kmph road signs may be clustered in groups of three (located 1 metre apart) and a minimum distance of 90 metres should be maintained between the groups of signs on the same side of the road. ▪ Billboards should be designed in a manner that allows them to be taken down in the instance of severe storms or cyclone.
Temporary Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The sign must be of a religious, educational, cultural, political, social or recreational nature. ▪ Advertising of a commercial nature should be limited (except in the case of identifying sponsors naming rights). ▪ In terms of the use of a temporary sign for an event, a sign should not be displayed earlier than 28 days before the date of the event and should be removed within 14 days of the completion of the event (with the exception of election signs which may be erected up to 6 months prior to the election). ▪ Once the sign is removed the land should be returned to its original or an improved state.

11 GLOSSARY

11.1 Sign Types



Figure 7: Sign Types

Advertising sign means any form of advertising using words, letters, images, pictures, symbols, objects, or illumination, which is exhibited or displayed on or in a public place or on a building or structure that is in view of a public place, for the attention of the public, and includes any structure or material used to display the advertising.

Aerial sign is considered to be a **temporary sign**, an aerial sign means advertising signs made of inflatable devices or devices that require wind to stay aloft, being devices that are tethered to the ground or a structure and includes balloons, blimps and kites. Such signs are generally discouraged in Samoa and will only be approved for short-term usage.

Animated sign is considered to be an **illuminate sign**, an animated sign means an advertising sign that is designed to move, flash, change its message, intensity or pattern, or which contains moving parts, whether or not any part of the sign is also illuminated. Such signs are generally discouraged in Samoa and will be restricted to **commercial areas**.

Banner means an advertising sign intended for **temporary sign** display made of light non-rigid material, and which is attached to a building or structure.

Billboard sign means a large commercial advertisement (also called a major promotion sign), of which the content is not generally associated with the use of the land upon which it is located. Billboards are generally free-standing and often illuminated. A billboard is an advertising sign that is:

(a) self-supporting and not attached to the sides of a building, wall or fascia;

(b) is fixed to the ground; and

(c) may be erected on a pole/s or a pylon which is not on or part of a building or other structure.

Bunting is considered to be a **temporary sign**, bunting means devices which are attached to ropes or wires suspended above the ground and which are designed to draw attention by the nature of its construction, colour, movement or noise and includes streamers, pennants and wind-vanes. Such devices are generally discouraged in Samoa and will only be approved for short-term usage.

Business sign means an advertisement on a building that indicates the use of premises or nature of goods or services sold or provided from premises at that site.

Discretionary advertisement means:

(a) an advertisement that is not visible from outside the site where it is located;

(b) a **real estate sign**;

(c) a **temporary sign**;

(d) a public notice displayed by a public authority;

(e) advertisements behind the glass line of a shop window; or

(f) a single **pylon sign** erected on a site lawfully used for the purpose of a tourist facility.

Flag sign means an advertising sign displayed on cloth, canvas or synthetic material, which is hung from a vertical pole. Such signs are to be used to advertise an upcoming event and will only be approved for short-term usage.

Free-standing sign refer to **Billboard Sign**.

Illuminated sign means:

(a) An advertising sign illuminated by internal and/or external lights; and

(b) An advertising sign composed of light devices that do not flash, change intensity or pattern.

Illumination of signs is generally discouraged in Samoa and will be restricted to the **commercial and industrial areas**.

Projecting sign means an advertising sign attached to and protruding from a building or structure and includes:

(a) signs attached to and supported below an awning or below a ceiling at the entrance to an internal pedestrian area; and

(b) signs which extend beyond or above the horizontal walls, roof of the building or structure.

Pylon sign refer to **Billboard Sign**.

Real estate sign means a 'For Sale' or 'To Let' sign erected at or affixed to the property the subject of the sign

Residential sign means a non-illuminated advertisement that indicates the name occupation and other particular matters of the resident(s) of the premises upon which the advertisement is displayed.

Sign refers to a publicly displayed board or notice inscribed with words or designs for the purposes of information, advertisement or warning.

Temporary sign means a sign that lasts, exists, serves or is effective for a limited time only and/or which is intended to be displayed for a limited time only and which:

- (a) concerns any local event of a religious, educational, cultural, political, social, or recreational nature;
- (b) does not include advertising of a commercial nature, except for name of any sponsor;
- (c) The site must be returned to its original condition once sign is removed.

Wall sign (painted or flush) means an advertisement painted (or mounted) onto a wall of a building (including an advertisement affixed as adhesive vinyl or similar material).

11.2 Other Terms

Ancillary means that the use is a secondary function of the main land use

Exhibit means to erect, install, place, paint, leave or construct an advertising sign on or in a public place or on or in premises in view of a public place.

Public place means any place within Samoa which is a road reserve or land owned, controlled or maintained by the Samoan Government.

Traffic Control Device means a traffic control signal or a light, sign, mark, structure or item placed, erected or displayed for the purpose of regulating, warning or guiding traffic, or a device using a word, symbol, coloured light or a combination of them by means of which traffic may be controlled or regulated.

References:

Planning and Urban Management Act, 2004

National Building Code, 1992