

# **Class 3l ~ Signs for Agricultural and Related Land Use in Rural and Natural Areas**

## **Background**

This sign class covers the majority of free-standing signs or signs attached to gates or gate structures outside urban areas, i.e. rural and natural areas. All of these signs will be locality bound.

These signs were previously incorporated under [Class 3k ~ On-premises Business Signs](#) and [Class 3j ~ Miscellaneous Signs for Residential Oriented Land Use and Community Services](#) in the current SAMOAC of April 1998 (Changed respectively to [Class 3f](#) and [Class 3k](#) in Draft Revised SAMOAC – July 2008). Due to the complexity of these two existing sign classes, signs in rural and natural areas were separated from those in urban areas and combined in one newly created class in order to achieve a more user-friendly SAMOAC. Experience has also shown that it is not always possible to distinguish between the functions of residence, accommodation and enterprise in rural and natural areas which favours an integrative approach in rural and natural areas.

## **Description**

This new sign class 3l includes signs indicating:

- The name of a farm and the owner or occupant of the farm.
- Name and nature of a farming corporation or enterprise.
- Name and nature of protected area or conservation project.
- Agricultural products for sale.
- Names of commercial enterprises such as farm stalls, bush pubs and farm stores.
- Names of conference facilities and accommodation facilities such as guest houses and lodges.
- Names of other tourist/ recreational attractions and facilities.
- Names of churches and other community facilities.
- Information on field trials

Signs in this class may consist of the following structural types:

- Individual free-standing signs
- Combination or stack signs
- Signs on entrance gates
- Banners and flags indicating the name and nature of an enterprise or advertising products sold at such an enterprise.

### **Sign size**

The size of signs should be reflected by the hierarchy of roads along which they are displayed and the speed at which vehicles travel along such roads. Signs need to be larger along a tarred provincial road than along a local gravel road. Seen in this light the proposed sign sizes may have to be adapted.

### **Contribution to the aesthetic environment & local character**

Signs in this sign class lend themselves to artistic expression and may make a positive contribution to the visual environment. On the other hand oversized, poorly designed and dilapidated signs will have the opposite effect. Rural smallholdings normally pose a serious problem. These areas are often smothered by a large number of shoddy signs indicating the names of landowners and a hodgepodge of activities and enterprises struggling to survive. It is of great importance that landowners and other role-players should be enlightened with regard to the importance of neat signage. A guideline document should be developed in this regard.

Class 4I signs can play an important role in enhancing local character by using relevant materials, supporting structures and other design features. In addition farm stalls together with the signs attached to or painted onto such structures can also make an important contribution in this regard. In many cases inappropriate building styles are used for farm stalls which have no relevance to the specific area or region. The above-mentioned guideline document should also include farm stalls and other relevant signs.

In many cases boundary walls, gate structures and farm stalls are painted in very bright colours in order to attract attention. This practice should also be seen as a form of outdoor advertising and **should not be allowed** due its enormous impact on the visual environment. Wherever possible murals on boundary walls and gate structures should be painted in subdued colours.

## **The misuse of signs for agricultural field trails**

The real purpose of signs for agricultural field trails is to provide information to those who are involved with the field trails. There is therefore no need for this information to be visible to the general public. However, in many cases where such field trails are undertaken next to a main road, the name of the company involved is indicated on relatively large signs. In such cases field trails are therefore misused for advertising purposes. Since there is no real need for field trail signs to be visible to the general public the inclusion of any signs for field trails in SAMOAC should be reconsidered.

## **Proliferation of signs & a limited amount of information**

The proliferation of signs in this class should be avoided at all costs. Duplication of signs should be prevented. The display of an excessive number of signs may be avoided by making use of:

- Stack signs where more than one farm, enterprise, facility or activity need to be indicated at an entrance or turn-off to a private road. It may even be a good idea to indicate the names of farms/ smallholdings on combination signs at key points on public roads in order to assist the police service, reaction units and emergency services in the case of emergencies. Since such signs may be seen as road signs it may be necessary to make provision for this purpose in the SADC Road Traffic Signs Manual.
- Brown tourism signs as directional and advance signs ([See Class 4c ~ Tourism direction signs](#)).

The amount of information on any sign should be limited. Only basic information for identification purposes should be provided. Contact information should not be aimed at the passing motorist. This should rather be provided at entrances in smaller print which will only be legible after the motorist has stopped. A brochure dispenser or information display may also be used for displaying contact and other detail information. However, such facilities should be of a neat appearance. A generic symbol may be used on the main sign to indicate that such information is available once the motorist has stopped.

## **Other important sign classes of relevance to agricultural and related land use in rural and natural areas**

The following sign classes are of great relevance to agricultural and related land use in rural and natural areas of maximum control:

## Community facilities and services

- [Class 2c](#) ~ Commercial signs at educational facilities such as farm schools. Only allowed in rural areas and not in natural areas and will be limited to school sites facing roads with a speed limit of not more than 60 km p h. This will limit the opportunities for displaying such signs in rural areas.

## Property sales & auctions

- [Class 2g\(iv\)](#) ~ Estate agents' boards & show house signs
- [Class 2g\(v\)](#) ~ Auction signs. Stock auctions form an important part of the life of farming communities.

## Security & crime

- [Class 2j](#) ~ Security signs. With a worsening security situation in South Africa and the reality of farm attacks this sign type is of critical importance to farming communities.

## Tourism

- [Class 2e](#) ~ Street furniture & large posters in pedestrian areas, e.g. areas with a lot of pedestrian movement at important tourist attractions. Allowed in rural areas only, but should not be visible from any public road.
- [Class 4c](#) ~ Tourism signs. Consist of brown tourism signs that form part of the SADC Road Traffic Signs Manual.
- [Class 4e](#) ~ Signs for tourist attractions. Sponsored signs providing on-site information at tourist attractions.

## Enterprises

The following signs may be attached to farm stalls and other rural enterprises for the purpose of identifying such enterprises and for advertising products and services.

- [Class 3b](#) ~ Roof signs. Only in rural areas of maximum control.
- [Class 3c](#) ~ Wall signs
- [Class 3d](#) ~ Signs & murals painted on walls and roofs. Signs painted on roofs are allowed in rural areas of maximum control only.
- [Class 3g](#) ~ Projecting signs
- [Class 3h](#) ~ Veranda, balcony & under awning signs
- [Class 3i](#) ~ Advertisements on forecourts of business premises

## Contributing to Local Character



Wine estates near Stellenbosch



Entrance gate and name sign of game lodge near Groot Marico, North West Province, making use of natural materials





Riverine Rabbit Conservancy near Beaufort West, Western Cape – the rustic sign structure harmonises with the barren Karoo landscape.

### Artistic Expression



Making use of materials at hand to give expression to artistic talent – farm name signs near Viljoenskroon, Free State Province.



## Inappropriate Signs



What a mess!!! A collection of untidy farm stall and bush pub signs and banners near Nelspruit, Mpumalanga, trying to stun passers-by into submission. Some of the banners have even been attached to a barbed wire fence.



Soft drink on a stick in the middle of the Karoo – or may one rather use the fitting American expression of 'litter on a stick'. In most cases product replicas such as this create an untidy appearance. Product replicas should therefore not be allowed in rural and natural areas of maximum control.

Oversized sign indicating abattoir and feedlots on a farm near Vrededorft, Free State Province. Telephone numbers should not be aimed at passing motorists since it impairs traffic safety.

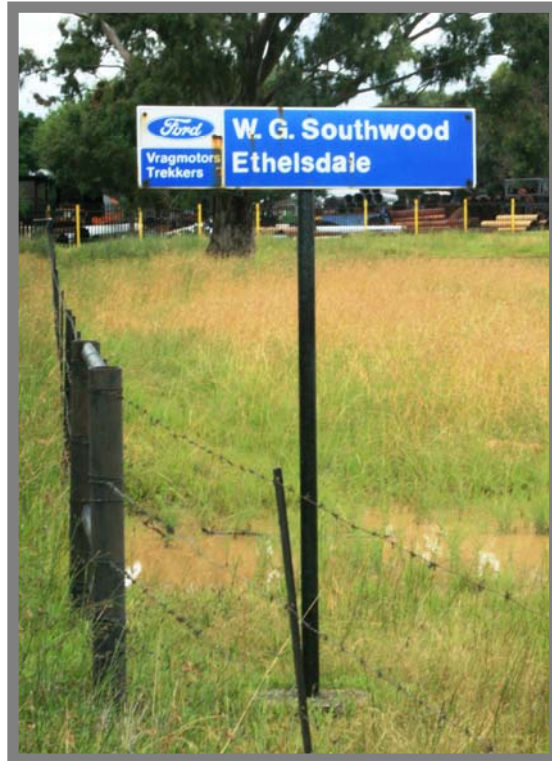
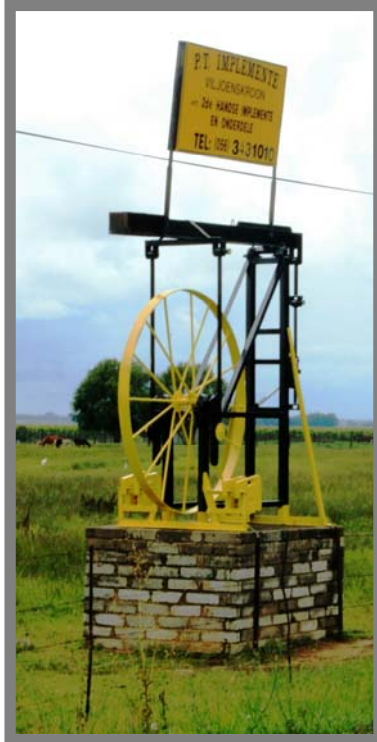


The above signs cannot be described as visually pleasant. It will do much better being incorporated into the design of the entrance gate.





Very original structure advertising second hand farming implements and parts for sale (left under). Unfortunately, the sign panel, standing askew on top, is not doing justice to the whole structure. It would have done much better if attached to a somewhat higher pedestal.



Sponsored farm name sign (top). According to the conditions in SAMOAC only one third of the sign space may be used for promoting the sponsor. However, blue and white being the only colours on the sign implies that 100% of the sign space is being used for this purpose.



Combination sign on a public road near Murraysburg in the Western Cape, indicating the direction to a number of farms. Although very untidy it indicates a need for this type of sign.



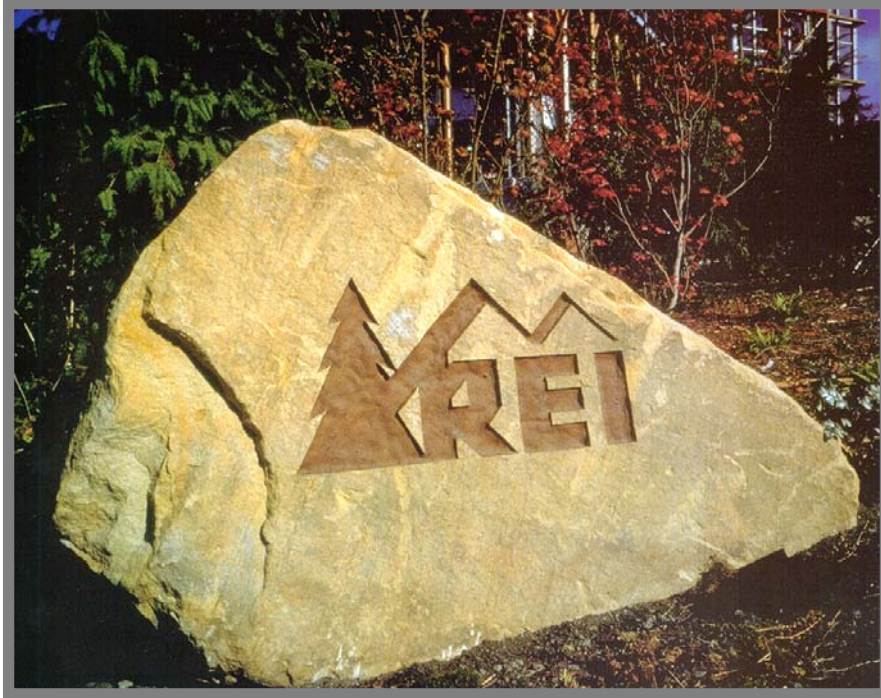
A proliferation of untidy signs directing the tourists to a variety of facilities and which does not create a very friendly tourist environment. What is needed here is a combination sign incorporating all these signs in a visually pleasant way.

### Visual Balance



Signs on a gate structure indicating a resort and the name of the farm and owner. In order to obtain a visual balance signs such as these should be allowed on each side of the entrance.

## Natural Materials



Compiled by Frans Jordaan