

Class 3c ~ Wall signs

This sign type is called 'flat signs' in the existing SAMOAC (April 1998). Due to the current use of quite attractive arched or tilted signs against walls this term has become misleading and has therefore been renamed 'wall signs.'

The current SAMOAC requires that flat signs 'shall at no point project more than 300 mm from the surface of the main wall.' In order to provide for arched or tilted sign panels this requirement has been changed to: 'At least one of the edges of a wall sign shall be within 300 mm of the surface of the main wall to which it is attached.'

Non-locality-bound wall signs are limited to the side walls of buildings for two reasons:

- Side walls often provide large uninterrupted and uniform planes (without any windows or other structural elements) onto which large signs may be attached. Structurally and visually this provides the best option. Large signs attached to the façade of a building will in most cases interfere with the main design elements of the building, thereby having a negative visual impact on the building and the streetscape in general.
- Non-locality-bound wall signs attached to the façade of a building will in an unfair manner compete with signs needed to indicate the name and nature of enterprises inside the building and may even overshadow such signs.

However, non-locality bound signs may be considered on main walls/ façades if the architectural design features allows for such signs or if buildings have been designed as advertising structures – a quite interesting and innovative concept which has recently emerged in the outdoor advertising industry. Since such 'advertising buildings' may generate more income from their advertising walls than from office or retail space they should be managed with care in order to prevent urban landscapes from being overwhelmed by these buildings. Only a limited number of advertising buildings should be allowed in the metropolitan areas of South Africa while their numbers and locations should be determined through the SEA procedure.

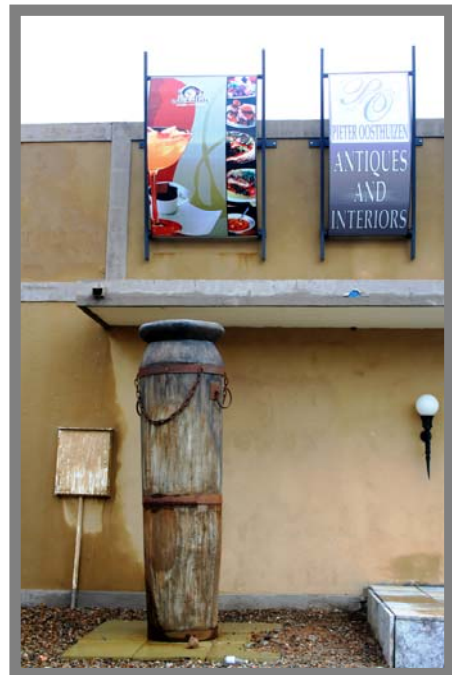
Wall signs are not allowed above the second floor of building façades if such façades have windows since these wall signs may very easily obstruct the views from the windows, interfere with the design features of the buildings and dominate the visual environment.



Arched & Tilted Wall Signs

A very striking mini shopping centre in Parys, Free State Province. The tilted/arched wall signs make an important contribution to the appeal of this centre.

This is a clear illustration of what may be achieved if building, signs and décor are incorporated in a holistic design process.



Poor Design and Sign Control



Insufficient provision of sign space when designing shopping centres seems to be a common problem. In the top image space for wall signs has been provided to a certain extent, but a larger need than anticipated and poor sign control have led to the available space having been exceeded. Signs are competing with each other for attention smothering architectural design elements to such an extent that the building cannot be recognised for what it was meant to be. *Tony's* for instance has 4 oversized and poorly positioned signs where one would have been sufficient.

In the case of the shopping centre in the lower images almost no provision was made for wall signs or any other signs. Signs have to be positioned in all sorts of inappropriate positions blocking views from windows and clashing with architectural design elements.

Cases like these may be solved by undertaking SEAs for existing shopping centres which will include all relevant sign types and all aesthetic issues. In the case of new shopping centres opportunities for signs should be considered from the beginning of the planning process.

Harmonious Design



Much better provision has been made for larger signs which harmonise with the design elements of these shopping centres

Non-Locality Bound Wall Signs on Side Walls



Large non-locality bound wall signs with artistic and tasteful graphics can make an important contribution to the visual environment if placed in an uncluttered environment (top, left & right). This is not the case with the sign, bottom right, which has been placed in an environment cluttered with a lot of commercial signs.

Large wall signs may even be placed on front walls if architectural design provides sufficient windowless space (centre, left). Large wall signs should be placed in harmony with main architectural design lines. The sign at the centre left has been positioned perfectly; the centre right sign is too large for the existing space and defies all visual principles, while the sign at the bottom left may be placed a bit lower down. The catwalk also impacts on the simplicity and purity of the sign. There may be ways of harmonising the catwalk with its background or alternative maintenance techniques may be applied.

Images from:

<http://www.clearchannel.co.uk>
<http://www.adsoutdoor.com>

Using Buildings as Advertising Structures





Using the façades of buildings as huge advertising structures should not be allowed when sufficient clear space for displaying such advertisements is not available. The images on this page show clearly how the architectural appeal of buildings may be destroyed by covering important architectural elements such as windows. This practice may also alter existing cityscapes and may contribute to the creation of monotonous, universal cityscapes on a global scale thereby destroying local sense of place.

Although some window openings have been restored to create some sort of respectability (centre, left & right) the overpowering influence of these wall signs cannot be denied.



Inappropriate mega wall signs may contribute to sign proliferation (bottom left)

Images by Scenic America - <http://www.scenic.org>

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