

12 January 2021

Planning application Number: PP2020-0290

Construct and display business identification and directional signage

10 Hopkins Rd, Warrnambool, 3280

We wish to outline our concerns regarding the business identification sign (Premises 2 with Hopkins Rd frontage) included in this application for three new signs at Lyndoch Living, which was erected prior to a council permit being obtained.

As highlighted by the applicant, Lyndoch Living is located in a PUZ3 planning zone and is subject to specific requirements for signage under Clause 52.05 of the Victorian Planning Provisions and as a Category 4 area (Sensitive) including:

1. Business identification signs in a Category 4 area **must not exceed 3 sq/m in size.**
2. signs are compatible with the amenity and visual appearance of an area, **including the existing or desired future character.**
3. "Category 4 signs – Sensitive areas" contains a specific set of rules **to provide for unobtrusive signs** in areas requiring strong amenity control.

We believe that this business identification sign fails to meet all three of these objectives.

First, according to this application, this business identification sign has a total face area of 2.94m/sq which has been calculated by measuring the height of the logo and height and width **of each individual letter** in the sign. Using this letter-by-letter calculation, the sign scrapes in, by a mere 6cm, to the permissible maximum size of 3m/sq for a Category 4 sign under planning laws.

The sign, however, **actually measures 1.17m at its highest point and is 5.14m in length, creating an area of 6 sq/m, which is double the permissible limit.**

As such, we believe this sign fails to respect the intent of the Category 4 restrictions which are specifically designed to protect sensitive areas, including residential areas.

Instead, collating the size of the individual letters is a spurious attempt to meet the planning restrictions for a sensitive area, while actually erecting a sign of more than 5 metres in length.

If the WCC approves a sign of this size under the Category 4 restrictions, it will create an unwelcome precedent for more “creative” interpretations of the maximum sign size in residential areas right across Warrnambool.

As it sits, this 5m-long business identification sign is now by far the largest sign fronting Hopkins Rd, Marfell Rd and Otway Rd, and represents a significant change to what has been low-impact signage associated with the Lyndoch Living aged care facility for the past 60 years.

Second, the Lyndoch Living precinct is adjacent to a well-established residential area bounded by Hopkins Rd-Otway Rd-Marfell Rd-Hickford Pde-Belmore Rd that is dominated by low-rise, mid-century homes and contains almost no commercial activity beyond Lyndoch, other than a milk bar (leased from Lyndoch) and a small bed and breakfast.

This precinct is fast developing a reputation as a one of the best, intact mid-century precincts in Warrnambool and deserves greater council protection from inappropriate development including unnecessary commercial signage.

Such protection reflects the desire of Clause 52.05 that signs are compatible with the amenity and visual appearance of an area, **including the existing or desired future character.**

It also reflects the intent of Category 4 that signs be unobtrusive and preserve the amenity and character of an area.

This is a business identification sign for an aged care home that has operated at the same site for more than 60 years. The purpose of this sign is no more than commercial branding, as it is not required to direct or attract customers. It is non-essential.

If approved as is, it will also set a precedent for future business signage at Lyndoch Living as it expands into more commercial ventures, including the recently approved construction of a medical clinic, café and chemist on Hopkins Rd, that Lyndoch has said will primarily service the general public.

Lyndoch also has plans to build more apartments, retirement units and associated infrastructure as part of a \$100m masterplan that, thus far, is being developed in chunks without any larger community conversation about its impact on the sensitive residential area in which it operates.

In summary, we consider this application to be a vital opportunity to get things right from the beginning with the changing face of Lyndoch Living and to ensure its commercial ambitions not only fully meet planning laws but respect the character of this mid-century neighbourhood so that it may be preserved and not destroyed by unsympathetic development.

We hope that the fact that this particular sign is already in place – having been erected without a permit – does not preclude it being altered and resized to fully meet the obligations and intent of the planning regulations.

Thankyou for the opportunity to respond.