



BCS Inc. Address to Bayside City Council General Committee 2008-04-22

[Agenda Item 4.21:](#)

STAFF REPORT ON COASTAL SIGNAGE DESIGN

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This staff report is to implement Council's Coastal Signage Strategy 2007, which proposes smaller signs for the Art Trail. The Strategy notes, "... the amount of blank white space and the large size of the signs is not sympathetic to the environment and the view." The size has been dealt with, but the first BCS Inc. recommendation below proposes a more specific remedy for the white background problem.

Section 3.1 understandably recommends that the depiction of a painting, and the present view of the landscape it once depicted, be viewable simultaneously, but it fails to deal with the quandary that the obtrusive rectangular sign can then become a permanent blot on that same landscape.

There are Too Many Signs: BCS Inc. notes Council's resolve to modify its 'Art Trail', and add extra interpretive trails, but points to inherent conflicts of purpose in the natural coastal landscape affected. By definition, a natural coastal landscape is free of alien artefacts like signs. A sight visitors to this landscape want to avoid is the ubiquitous signage in Melbourne's vast built-up areas. Instead they find, perversely, that Beach Park at the Ricketts Point Marine Sanctuary has **180** signs erected by 8 different organizations, a seemingly greater average signage density than most places in Melbourne, apart from its commercial and industrial areas. Council should declare a maximum for the number of its signs here, and adhere to it.

Once Read, Signs just Clutter: Only vague consideration is being given to modified or alternative interpretive measures that would impact less persistently on the most frequent visitors to Beach Park. After frequent visitors to the reserve - who would account for a large percentage of its visitors - have read the fixed interpretive signs **the first time**, most would very rarely choose to inspect them again, yet the fixed signs linger as a conspicuous, irritating, ugly part of the landscape that is of no further use, but such official ugliness is hard to put out of sight and notice. [Googling "Ricketts Point"](#) shows Bayside Council's Web efforts to be a non-starter. Council should have visitors doing a Web search on Ricketts Point to see plenty of good Ricketts Point material Council should place there. That would be far more dynamic, flexible and ongoing, and far less harmful to Beach Park. School children will all have laptops soon.

BCS Inc. requests Council to consider including the following more specific measures in its response to the Staff Report:

- The text on all Coastal Trail signs should be white, for maximum reflectance, with the need for contrast leaving the background darker and thus less obtrusive, particularly against vegetation.
- The A2 size (600 x 420 mm) should be the maximum size for Coastal Trail signs, not the minimum as proposed.
- The former Sandringham Council's often derelict concrete plinths should not only be not re-used, but should be removed from Beach Park, along with the related largely derelict timber slabs used for notices.
- Use should be made, of as many as needed, of the 79 cemented basalt cairns, each 6 metres apart from Beaumaris Yacht Club to the Reserve Road drain, by fixing the Coastal Trail signs along there on those cairns, like the bronze plaque with councillors' names that is so far the only sign on any of them.