

## EXTERNAL FACILITIES

### Location

**Full margin** on all of your wine sales is an incredibly attractive reason for establishing your cellar door and most cellar doors rely on a steady flow of visitors to keep the cash registers ticking over. Therefore, unless you've developed a solid cult-like brand reputation established over many years in the game, location is likely to be of supreme importance.

One of the first things to consider is **where** your visitors are likely to come from. Conduct a mapping exercise that places your location (or desired location) in the centre of a circle and look closely at what roads, towns and attractions (natural and built) are within say 5km, 10km, 50km and beyond. What is the population catchment of the area? How many visitors travel the main tourist routes near you or past your door? How many people visit the region each year and how long do they stay? Based on the answers to these questions you then need to calculate **how many visitors** your property is likely to attract on a seasonal basis. Are these numbers viable to sustain and grow your business? If not, either reconsider your location or create alternative ways to attract visitors.

### Signage

The best location in the world won't help much if visitors can't find you! Strategically placed **directional road signage** (in accordance with council guidelines) is essential for flagging down visitors ahead of your entrance. Likewise, your **entry signage** should be prominent and strongly reflect your brand image. It should also be visible from both directions (if relevant) and free from obstructions like overhanging trees. Also consider **seasonal promotional signage** to attract different target markets or capture the attention of locals who drive past regularly and ignore you because they "know" you're there. On a cold winter's day, a sign proclaiming "Warm up by our fire with a hot coffee" (or port) will generate interest. Or a similar sign in summer offering a "Chilled Riesling in the shade of the vine canopy." If you offer food or host events, then roadside signage can be rotated regularly to reflect changing menus and entertainment.

### Entry

Visitors will begin to form an impression about you and your brand the moment they enter your property. Your **entry statement** is important because it reflects your brand and it must be welcoming. Ensure the entry from the main road is safe and free from obstructions to avoid heavy braking or sudden encounters with outbound traffic. If you have both an entry and exit gate, ensure they are clearly signed to avoid confusion. The **surface of your driveway** needs to cater for the range and number of vehicles you're likely to attract. Does your target market include coaches and mini buses? What about motor homes and caravans? Drivers of limousines, hire cars and fancy sports cars abhor rough gravel roads and tend to avoid them. Whatever surface you utilise, ensure it is well drained, well maintained and free of hazards (like dust in dry conditions and mud or potholes in wet conditions). And if buses are encouraged, ensure your driveway is wide enough to accommodate them and there is sufficient room for oncoming traffic to pass.

What will visitors see as they drive in to your cellar door? Your driveway offers an opportunity to **set the scene** for the entire experience, so road verges need to be well maintained, and the property beyond should also be visibly appealing. This is particularly important if your driveway is fairly long and the cellar door is not obvious from the entry.

### Parking Area

Directional signage as visitors enter the parking area is extremely important. An all weather surface is essential, as is sufficient room to turn around. Define individual car parks if you can and clearly specify areas for disabled, bus and van parking. Ensure paths to the cellar door are clearly defined and well maintained and if the car park contains special features, then erect appropriate signage to encourage visitors to begin their experience immediately.

## Landscaping & Grounds

Your location and natural environment will dictate the way you present your grounds and gardens, and your brand image will play a part too. Maintaining large expanses of lawn in summer can be expensive unless you utilise recycled water, so consider both the costs and the environmental impact of your choices. And as Paul Stuart from Bimbadgen Estate says, "The appearance of your grounds and buildings can reflect how you make wine – with care and attention to detail."

## Building Exterior & Entrance

There is no single "right" way to create a cellar door building. The decision will be based on the functions the building needs to serve, as well as the environment, your brand image and of course, your budget. Whether you **convert** existing buildings to preserve a heritage aspect or **build from scratch**, ongoing **maintenance** is essential to maintain your look. Modern architecture often incorporates large expanses of glass, which require regular cleaning – often by external contractors if they are high. Also consider the local flightpaths of native birds if you're building in a rural area and intend incorporating lots of glass – it's common for them fly into windows, which may have a negative impact on the visitors' experience – as well as the bird's...

Ensure that **entry and exit doors** are clearly defined and easy to open and close. If possible, extend an undercover walkway from the parking area to the main door – it can be practical as well as visibly appealing. In fact, Stanley Brothers in the Barossa found that this one extension increased visitor numbers considerably.

Ensure that your entrance can accommodate **wheelchairs and prams**. For new buildings, this may mean installing ramps and handrails.

## Special Features

Standing out from the crowd – or in this case the other 1500 or so cellar doors in Australia – requires that you have an identifiable **point of difference**. For some, like All Saints Estate in the Rutherglen, it can be the building itself. Built in 1864 it is a Victorian icon, evoking romantic notions of castles and bygone eras. For others, like Banrock Station in the Riverland, the environment itself and the way it is presented create an essential link to the values of the brand and build a strong connection between visitors and environmental issues. Rymill Winery in the Coonawarra, is easily identifiable by the striking life-sized bronze statue of two fighting stallions that stands prominently in front of the winery and is the main feature of the brand.

Whatever feature you choose to enhance – whether existing or created specifically – it works best if you can connect it to your brand image in some way. Unconnected features can also work if they are thoughtfully designed to attract visitors to your property. Perhaps a nature walk on the property, outdoor sculpture or family facilities, such as barbecues and picnic areas.

## EXTERNAL FACILITIES CHECKLIST

### Entrance & Signage

- Entry easy to locate from main road
- Access lane if on main tourist route
- Entry statement and gates consistent with brand image
- Trading hours clearly displayed
- Road signage on access routes
- Conditions of entry displayed (ie. 'Coaches by appointment')
- Signage readable by passing traffic (day and night)

### Driveway & Parking

- Well drained and maintained all-weather surface
- Driveway wide enough for coaches and passing (if applicable)
- Surface well maintained (free of potholes, dust hazards)
- Edges landscaped and visually appealing
- Clearly designated parking for coaches and disabled visitors
- Parcel pick-up area/set-down area
- Sufficient turning space for range of vehicles
- Parking within close proximity to cellar door and areas clearly defined
- Well maintained and clearly defined access paths from car park to cellar door entrance
- Adequate lighting for navigation and safety
- Directional signage to cellar door and other facilities

### Landscaping & Grounds

- Consistent with brand image and environment
- Well maintained gardens and lawns
- Clearly defined and well maintained paths
- Provision of garbage cans and ash trays
- Directional signage to cellar door and other facilities
- Interpretive signage (plants, vineyards, views, architecture, features, etc)
- Well maintained picnic facilities (if applicable)
- Hazards clearly defined (dams, winery, machinery, etc)
- Viewing and relaxation areas, photo points, etc.

### Building Exterior

- Well maintained and windows clean
- Consistent with brand image
- Signage readable and welcoming
- Entrances and exits clearly defined
- Boundaries clearly defined (if attached to winery, house or other facilities)
- Interpretive signage for heritage features, etc
- Adequate lighting for after hours access

### Entrance to Cellar Door

- Easy to locate from car park and other facilities
- Welcoming statement consistent with brand image
- Access via covered walkway if possible
- Well maintained
- Safe access for disabled, seniors, children, groups
- Separate group entrance if applicable

### Special Features

- Barbecue and picnic facilities
- Nature walk
- Children's playground
- Sculpture/outdoor art
- Sensory or native garden