

## Guidelines - Plaques and Memorials



For Consultation as at 22-02-2023

### 1 Purpose of the Guidelines

Whanganui is a district with many histories, stories, and narratives. Through storytelling and marking of significant sites in the public realm, people can connect to place as well as to each other. Better understandings of place and people in turn help to reinforce and strengthen community wellbeing.

The purpose of the Guidelines - Plaques and Memorials is to provide certainty and process with regard to the marking of public sites of significance in the Whanganui District.

This is to avoid ad hoc, prolific, inappropriate or varying-quality placement of plaques and memorials.

### 2 Application and Scope

These guidelines apply to plaques and memorials within public places under the control of Council and includes roads, parks and property owned or under the Council.

### 3 Process

(1) No person shall erect a plaque or memorial within a public place except as approved by Council.

(2) A plaque or memorial shall not be erected until at least five years after the event to which they relate.

(3) Any person or organization may apply to install a plaque or memorial.

(4) In considering an approval for a plaque or memorial Council will act on the advice of the Plaques and Memorials and Interpretation Panel.

For the avoidance of doubt, commemorative park furniture or trees within Council parks are not required be considered by the panel.

(5) The Plaques and Memorials and Interpretation Panel will consist of:

- i. a Councillor;
- ii. a Council Parks officer;
- iii. Council's heritage officer;
- iv. up to two (2) Iwi representatives dependent on the subject matter being considered; and
- v. a community heritage representative.

(6) In considering the approval the Plaques and Memorials and Interpretation Panel will consider:

- i. context and appropriateness of the application;
- ii. importance and relevance to the community;
- iii. connectedness of the proposal to people and place;
- iv. views of the community including stakeholder groups;
- v. presence of a range and diversity of themes covered by plaques and memorials;
- vi. any text and images;
- vii. material;
- viii. location, size and position;
- ix. fit with existing context and character, including built form; and
- x. whether the proposal has longevity, and if it does not require extensive ongoing upkeep and security.

## 4 Definition of areas

(1) The District is not uniform in the number of points of interest which the community may wish to highlight.

Each of the following areas requires different considerations.

- i. Town centre – High potential, already has brass rubbings, pamphlets, very high visibility
- ii. Town centre waterfront – High potential, some existing plaques, very high visibility
- iii. Other urban riverbank areas – moderate potential, high visibility
- iv. Wider urban area – lower potential, low visibility
- v. Industrial and commercial areas – lower potential, low visibility
- vi. Rural – lower potential, low visibility
- vii. Whanganui River Road – moderate potential, high visibility

## 5 Plaque and Interpretive Signage Placement Policy Considerations

(1) Plaques and interpretive signs have a role in telling local stories in that they are able to convey specific information about sites or events which is not apparent by direct observation. There are alternative options such as markers which relate to pamphlets or other sources, and technology is increasingly playing a larger role at many historical sites through the use of QR codes, and augmented reality. Plaques have the advantage that they are completely accessible to anyone happening upon them, without the need to be actively seeking information.

In considering the placement the following urban design considerations should taken into account:

- i. Context: Seeing that buildings, places and spaces are part of the whole town or city
- ii. Character: Reflecting and enhancing the distinctive character, heritage and identity of our urban environment
- iii. Collaboration: Communicating and sharing knowledge across sectors, professions and communities.

## 6 Themes, content, and design

(1) In order to reflect the wider Whanganui Story, it is important that a range of **Whanganui's stories** and themes is covered. This approach has been successfully used in the Whanganui Story set of stained glass windows in the Council Chambers.

There is an expectation that proposals for plaques or interpretation in the public realm will cover material that is acceptable to share in the public realm. Any stakeholder groups should be identified and consulted with prior to the proposal being submitted to Council, and evidence provided demonstrating their support for the proposal.

To ensure a high-quality outcome, thought should be given to the design of the plaque, memorial, or interpretation panel. Proposals should include details around what the project will look like when completed, and final designs and content should be approved by the panel prior to manufacture and installation.

## 7 Methods

(1) Plaques offer limited information, which for many situations is all that is required. There will be situations where a fuller display of information would be more appropriate. In such cases consideration should be given to the installation of full interpretive material.

## 8 Materials and Ongoing maintenance

(1) Most existing plaques are in brass, bronze, aluminium and granite. These materials are preferred for their longevity low ongoing maintenance.

All metal plaques are at risk due to their scrap value. All plaques are at risk of removal unless very securely attached to solid objects such as buildings, rocks or pavement.

Increasingly, interpretive signage is made using acrylic or metal. Again, these materials are preferred for their longevity and low requirement levels for ongoing maintenance.