

SCHEDULE 9: Foxton and Shannon Town Centre Design Guide

FOXTON AND SHANNON TOWN CENTRE DESIGN GUIDE

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HOROWHENUA DISTRICT PLAN

Foxton and Shannon
Town Centre

DESIGN GUIDE

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1. Introduction

Foxton and Shannon's town centres are valued for their historic character and contribution that the buildings make to the streetscape and urban environment. The two town centres developed over a relatively small period of time due to their role as major transport links for developing areas and servicing the surrounding rural areas. The buildings contain a number of similar and distinctive characteristics which contribute to the overall amenity and character of the town centres. Through the District Plan and this Design Guide, new development is to be managed to ensure it is keeping with this amenity and character.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Foxton and Shannon Town Centre Design Guide is to outline the design principles and guidelines for the design of new buildings and additions/alterations to existing buildings in the Foxton and Shannon Town Centres. The intention is to maintain and enhance the character and amenity values of the area through ensuring any new work complements and relates with the existing character.

2.1 Aims of the Guide

The aims of the Design Guide are:

- i. To encourage increased community awareness of the town centre's heritage, visual and environmental qualities and to promote community involvement.
- ii. To protect and conserve buildings, structures and sites of heritage and/or visual appeal and to retain the prominence of major historical elements in the District.
- iii. To promote the town as an economic destination for locals and visitors;
- iv. To recognise tourism as an important economic factor and to promote the District as a destination of historic interest and aesthetic appeal.
- v. To retain as appropriate the historic character of the town centre.
- vi. To encourage the development of the town centre as a focus for community activity and a place of public use.
- vii. To ensure that new development within the town centre is compatible with the scale, built character, visual aesthetic and functional attributes of existing development and buildings.
- viii. To achieve a balance in encouraging innovative and creative design solutions that are affordable and achieve the above.
- ix. To recognise there is a balance with earthquake prone buildings between life and safety considerations against economic and heritage considerations.

2.2 Application and Implementation

This Design Guide applies to the Foxton and Shannon Town Centre Heritage/Character Overlay Areas identified on the Planning Maps. This Heritage/Character Overlay Area generally relates in Foxton to properties with frontage to the northern end of Main Street, as well as a few properties in Avenue Road, Clyde Street, Whyte Street and Wharf Street. In Shannon, this Overlay Area applies along Plimmer Terrace and Ballance Street.

The Design Guide also include a specific section for the Foxton Tourism Overlay Area identified on the Planning Maps. This Tourism Overlay Area is the southern part of the Foxton town centre south of Wharf Street and properties with frontage to Main Street and Harbour Street.



Figure 1: Aerial Map of Shannon Town Centre



Figure 2: Aerial Map of Foxton Town Centre

Under the District Plan rules, all new buildings and additions/alterations to existing buildings within these Overlay Areas require resource consent as a restricted discretionary activity, where they will be assessed against the Guidelines in this document. In addition, any proposed buildings which, do not comply with the permitted activity standards would also be assessed against the Guidelines.

The Design Guide is to be applied in conjunction with the other rules and standards in the District Plan. These rules and standards relate to such matters as transportation, historic heritage, signage and network utilities.

The Design Guide is to be used to:

- A** Property owners, developers, builders, designers and planners preparing development proposals; and
- B** Horowhenua District Council to evaluate development proposals as part of the resource consent process.

Within the Character/Heritage Overlay Areas, the Guidelines do not require replication of historic buildings and past architectural styles, but encourage the use of design elements, scale and proportion to enhance the character of the town centre and emphasise its historic qualities.

The design of new buildings in the town centre should be in harmony with the existing buildings and forms. Consideration must be given to roof type and pitch, the verandah and the rhythm of its supports and the proportions of windows and other openings. Where decoration and architectural features are used, they should follow the characteristic forms and details of these existing buildings.

Alterations and additions to existing buildings should not detract from the character of the building. They should complement the original building and be sympathetic to the style and character of that building. The siting of an addition should reflect the style and character of the older building. The scale and massing of new works must recognise the scale and massing of the original. When altering or adding to an existing building, the opportunity should be taken where possible to modify existing additions which are not sympathetic to the heritage character of both the building and the surrounding area.

For works undertaken for earthquake strengthening purposes, Council recognises a balance is required between ensuring works achieve their purpose in providing the health and safety of building occupants and the economic, heritage and streetscape values of the town centres

The Design Guide offers some flexibility to allow innovation and good design solutions that meet the objectives of this document. Development proposals that are not consistent with the Guidelines can be a basis for the Council to decline resource consent approval.

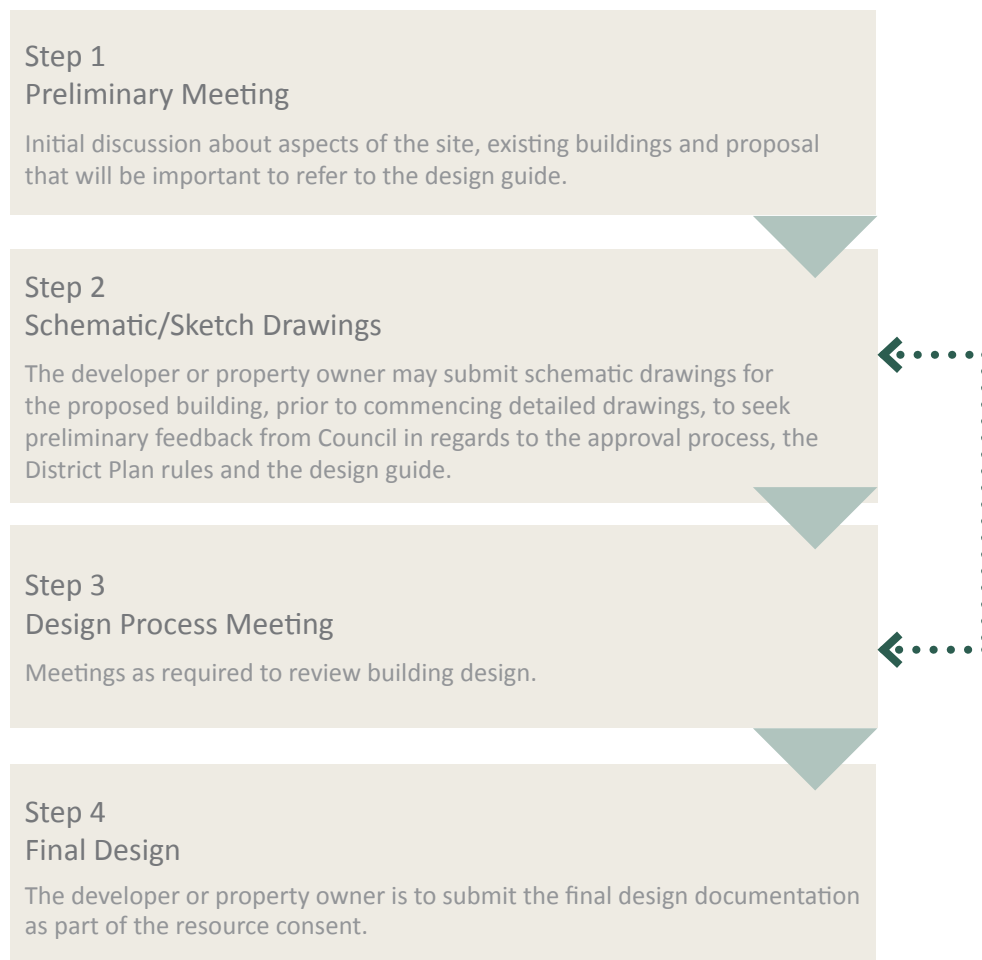
The images in the Design Guide are indicative only and intended to further explain the design outcome sought as outlined in the text. They should not be seen as actual design solutions. Innovative and creative design solutions that meet the intended future character of the area are encouraged.

2.3 Pre-Application Process

The Horowhenua District Council encourages landowners, developers and their architects, engineers and other advisers to work collaboratively throughout the development planning process and to seek early discussions with Council prior to undertaking detailed design for any development.

This process will enable concepts to be discussed prior to commencing detailed design to enable early feedback from Council and the most appropriate outcome for all parties to be reached.

A diagram of the desired process is described below. The need for all these steps will depend on the development scale. This process is optional but is intended to assist in providing for an efficient design and consenting process.



3. History and Character

3.1 Foxton

3.1.1 History of Foxton Town Centre

The site of the town – originally Te Awahou (new stream) - has had a long history of use by Maori (Ngati Raukawa tangata whenua) and then European people from early in New Zealand's colonisation. Foxton is situated close to the banks of the Manawatu River (now referred to as the Foxton River Loop). Foxton was named after Sir William Fox, a premier of New Zealand in the 1860's.

As a port town on the Manawatu River the place developed much of the town centre infrastructure that remains today (streets and buildings) which give it a strong built heritage character. Many of the old structures such as wharfs and associated buildings have long since been removed although a few vestiges remain. For Maori the place continues to hold many of the values of events and associations with use and occupation over time.



Figure 3: Foxton Main Street circa 1920s
Source: Foxton Historical Society

Along with the development of the river port came the flax industry that at one time supported multiple mills. The making of flax based products such as rope and carpets followed. The (now closed) Feltex carpet making industry has been a long term enterprise and employer within the town.

The majority of the Foxton town centre is focused along Main Street at the northern end and to a limited extent along connecting side streets (e.g. Wharf Street and Whyte Street).

3.1.2 Existing Character

The northern end of Foxton's town centre contains a variety of building styles and facades, some of which date from the turn of the century. They exhibit a distinctive style which, because of the width of the Main Street, tends to present two separated and relatively continuous facades, one either side of the street. There is therefore little visual connection between the two sides of the street, as there would be in a narrower street.

Buildings are sited on the front road boundary and face the street. Building heights are either 1 - 2 storey, except for the tall windmill which acts as a local landmark. Buildings generally have a small and regular (rectangular) shape and narrow street frontage, with a few larger buildings on larger sites.

The eastern side of the street also has to accommodate the late afternoon sun, and many shops have erected or incorporated into their verandahs quite deep verandah facades or shades. In some cases, while these shades are used for advertising and decorative purposes, they also can detract from the overall appearance of the building, by obscuring the more delicate traditional verandah frontage.

Parapets are a particular feature of Foxton's commercial buildings and a variety of styles are represented. Display windows on some premises retain their original character and have been modified little over the years. Circular corner glazing bars were common and sills either repeat this or were embellished. Panels under sills were also often fitted with heavy mouldings. Doorways were generally recessed square or within 45° angles of the show windows, centrally placed or to one side.

Verandah posts, many of which in the older style remain, were mostly round cast iron and highly decorated while the verandahs themselves were evenly pitched or bull-nosed. Wrought iron or wooden frets were also used.

The building frontages and activities along the Main Street create a pedestrian focused environment, with very few vehicle entrances, on-site parking or loading areas fronting Main Street. If on-site parking or loading is provided, these areas are accessed via side streets or service lanes. There is an abundance of on-street parking with the wide roads, as well as on-street loading areas to service the businesses.

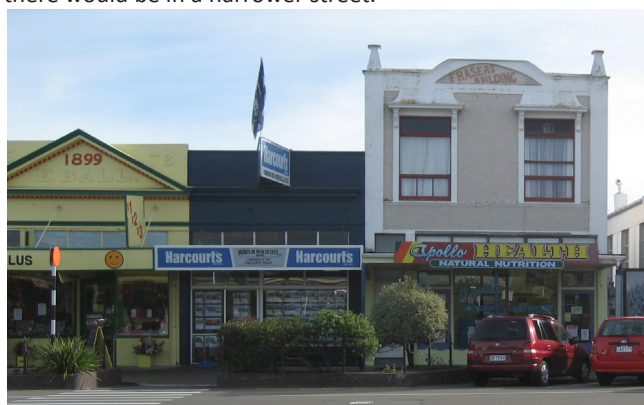


Figure 4: Shops on Main Street, Foxton



Figure 5: Building on corner of Main Street and Clyde Street, Foxton

3.2 Shannon

3.2.1 History of Shannon Town Centre

Known as Te Maire, the town planned on the site by the New Zealand Company in the 1840s was never built. The first settlers to Shannon, named after a director of the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company, arrived after land sales in 1887.



Figure 6: Plimmer Terrace, Shannon circa 1920s
Source: Horowhenua Historical Society Inc



Figure 7: WH Gunning & Co General Store, Plimmer Terrace, Shannon, 1920
Source: Horowhenua Historical Society Inc

Shannon originally adjoined extensive swamps and was a headquarters for flax milling. The land on which the township stands was part of an endowment of 215,000 acres acquired about 1881 by the Wellington and Manawatu Railway Company. At first the company had intended to extend its railway from Levin to Foxton, but afterwards it proceeded to develop and open up the endowment area. Accordingly, the line was laid along the present route via Shannon. Flax milling, the development of farmland, and dam building at Mangahao kept the town buoyant until the 1920s.

A significant number of buildings were constructed in the town centre between 1900 and 1920. The businesses occupying these buildings provided goods and services to the flax milling, farming and electricity industries, and the community. An imposing brick building for the Bank of New Zealand was erected in 1915 which still remains, as well as the brick Post Office.

The town centre developed along the main axis parallel with the railway (Plimmer Terrace). The original town plan also included a perpendicular main street linking with the Shannon Domain (Ballance Street). These two streets form the basic structure of the town centre.

3.2.2 Existing Character

Shannon's town centre contains a variety of building styles and facades associated with the period of time over which the town centre developed. There was a significant amount of buildings constructed between 1900 and 1920, with many existing buildings from this period making a significant contribution to the character of the town centre. Buildings from this period exhibit a distinctive scale, form and style, which are a mix of 1 - 2 storeyed buildings, with small frontage retail and commercial activities at road level, and residential flats or offices above.

Buildings are sited on the front road boundary and face the street. Buildings generally have a small and regular (rectangular) shape and narrow street frontage, with a few larger buildings on larger sites, such as the two pubs which 'bookmark' each end of the town centre on Plimmer Terrace. The Albion Hotel at the northern end was fire damaged in 2012 and at the time of preparing this Design Guide its future was unknown.

A feature of the existing town centre is the general absence of buildings and structures on the western side of Plimmer Terrace (Te Maire Park), except for the Railway Station building and War Memorial. Therefore, on Plimmer Terrace all buildings are located on the eastern side and face west.

Verandahs are a key feature of Shannon, both in terms of their aesthetic and visual influence, as well as their functional use in providing weather protection. Many of the existing verandahs are original, and retain distinctive features such as support posts and exposed under sides.

The maintenance of a continuous verandah along Plimmer Terrace and Ballance Street in the town centre is important, as well as the form, design and detailing of the verandahs. In addition, some prominent heritage buildings (e.g. Post Office and former Bank of New Zealand building) do not have verandahs, as this is not in keeping with the architecture and heritage values of these buildings.

A large number of buildings have parapets, some of which include decorative elements which present an imposing impression from the road. Display windows on some premises retain their original character and have been modified little over the years. Circular corner glazing bars were common and sills either repeat this or were embellished. Panels under sills were also often fitted with heavy mouldings. Doorways were generally recessed square or within 45° angles of the show windows, centrally placed or to one side.

The building frontages and activities along Plimmer Terrace and Ballance Street create a pedestrian focused environment, with very few vehicle entrances, on-site parking or loading areas fronting the streets. If on-site parking or loading is provided, these areas are accessed via side streets. There is an abundance of on-street parking with the wide roads, as well as on-street loading areas to service the businesses.



Figure 8: Typical Shannon street, with verandahs a predominant feature



Figure 9: Typical Shannon street showing the prominent mix of heritage buildings

4. Guidelines

The following Guidelines in Sections 4.1 – 4.5 only apply to the Foxton Town Centre Character/Heritage Overlay Area and the Shannon Town Centre Character/Heritage Overlay Area, but not the Foxton Tourism Overlay Area (refer Section 3.6).

4.1 Building Location and Form



Plimmer Terrace, Shannon



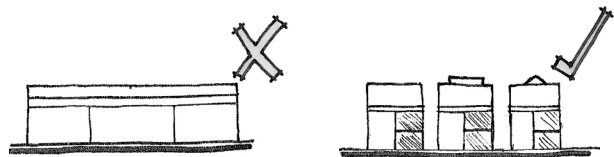
Former Whytes Hotel, Main Street, Foxton

1. Buildings should be located on the street frontage and form a continuity of frontages alongside the footpath. There should be no vehicle crossings to/from sites along the frontage of Main Street, Foxton or Plimmer Terrace and Ballance Street, Shannon.
2. For additions/alterations to existing buildings setback from the street, the additions/alterations should reflect the style, function and purpose of the original setback, and the addition should be sited to minimise the visual impact of the change when viewed from the street.
3. On corner sites, buildings are typically taller and should be two storey in height. Corner buildings should turn and define the corner with an appropriately designed angled face to the corner. Preferably, a principal entrance to the premises should be located on this angle. It is desirable for corner buildings to incorporate architectural features that enhance the corner (e.g. turrets, flagpoles, pediments). Also, corner sites provide the opportunity to create landmarks or prominent buildings which should be considered.

4. Buildings should retain and/or promote the continuation of the current building form characteristics, especially in terms of shape, scale and proportion to neighbouring buildings. Buildings should be either one or two storeys in height. Buildings should have relatively narrow frontages (no more than 8 metres wide). For larger and wider buildings, frontages are to be broken up into narrower sections through a high level of articulation in the facade through the use of architectural features, decoration and roof design.

5. Roof types should reflect historical forms and design, having a high pitch and either a gable or hip form. Early buildings of the area use these simple roof types. More complex roof types are typically combinations of these basic forms.

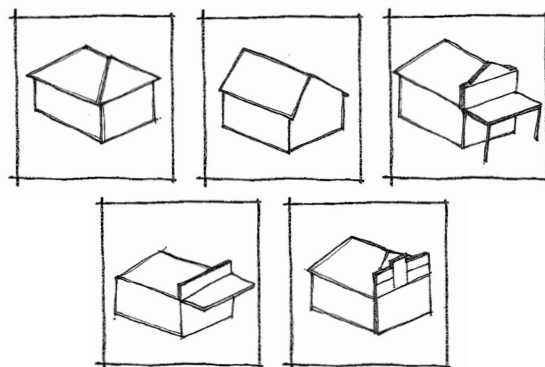
6. Parking, loading and service access should be provided at the rear of buildings where available from side streets or service lanes.



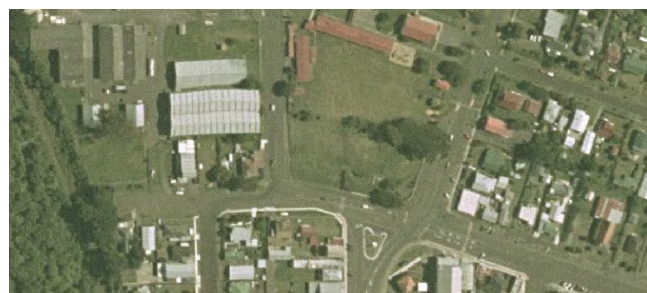
Frontage width of buildings



Buildings on Plimmer Terrace, Shannon

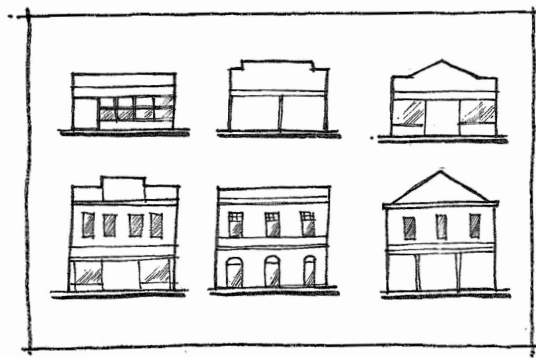


Building roof types



Parking, loading & service area at rear of buildings, Foxton

4.2 Facades



Facade composition



One and two storey buildings on Ballance Street, Shannon



Entrance and show windows on Plimmer Terrace, Shannon

7. On the street frontage, parapets should be provided on both single and two storey buildings and reflect existing styles and forms. Parapets disguise the gable end of a building and provide for decoration and interesting forms to be created. Parapet walls are typically stepped and symmetrical. Common features include finial, cornice moulding, and decorated barge board.

8. Facade composition should reflect existing size, proportions, styles and forms relating to window and door size; shape and type; proportion of window areas to walls; alignments of doors, windows, heads and sills.

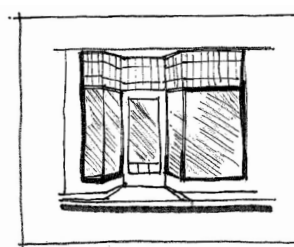
9. All buildings on Main Street, Plimmer Terrace and Ballance Street should provide a main entrance from these respective streets. Entranceways should be generally recessed square or within 45° angles of the show windows, centrally placed or to one side.

10. Glazing sizes and their extent should follow traditional forms, which generally do not include full height windows. Typically, such forms include a sill and lintel supporting a window that is not less than 60% of the total ground floor frontage area. Circular corner glazing bars are common and sills either repeat this or were embellished. Panels under sills were also often fitted with heavy mouldings

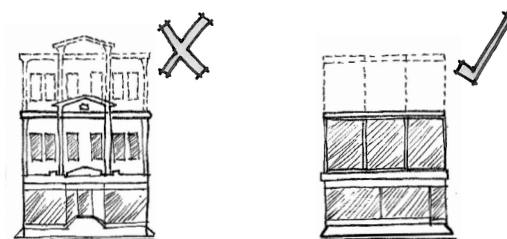
11. Security grills, roller doors, sliding doors where required should be retractable or removable and not an obtrusive feature of the facade.



Glazing on Ballance Street, Shannon

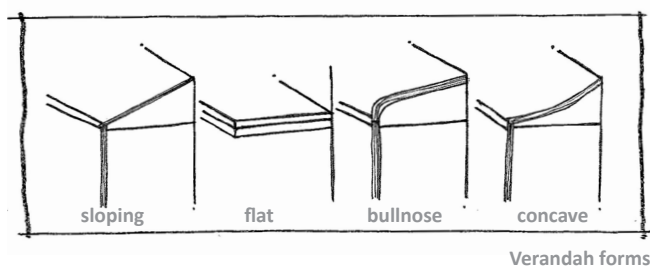


Recessed entrance ways with traditional glazing



Future development

4.3 Verandahs



Verandah posts on Plimmer Terrace, Shannon



Verandah posts on Main Street, Foxton

12. Verandahs are an important feature of the street, enhancing the historic character of the town. They enclose the footpath, provide shelter and protect building entrances. The design of the verandah should follow traditional forms (angled, sloping, concave, bullnose).

13. In Shannon, verandahs must include appropriate posts set close to the street edge. The spacing of posts must be designed to complement existing spacing and rhythm.

14. In Foxton, verandahs may include posts set close to the street edge. If posts are provided, they must reflect the older style and materials, with most round cast iron and highly decorated. Wrought iron or wooden frets are also a common feature of verandahs.

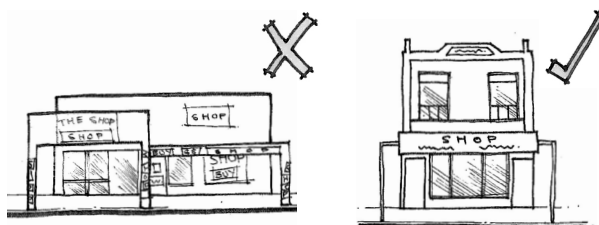
15. Under verandah lighting should be sympathetic to traditional scale and design, and wiring should be located discreetly.

4.4 Signage

16. Signs may be erected on buildings as they are recognised as essential to identifying a business and advertising. However, signage must not be used indiscriminately or with the effect of obscuring or destroying a building's character.

17. The size, shape and extent of signs should be of a form that is recognisably traditional. Signage should be located on and within parapets and verandahs only. Signage should not dominate facades, conceal windows or conceal architectural features. Signage may be located above verandahs but within parapet height, and may also be suspended within verandahs.

18. All signs must be sympathetic in size, scale and design with amenities and historical qualities of the area. They should be made or constructed in a neat and durable manner, using appropriate materials. Support brackets should be integral to the signage design.



Signage examples



Signage on corner of Ballance Street / Plimmer Terrace, Shannon



Signage on corner of Ballance Street / Plimmer Terrace, Shannon

4.5 Materials and Details



Retention of Whytes Hotel facade and new supermarket,
Main Street, Foxton

19. Materials used in new construction should match as closely as possible to those used in existing buildings, particularly for additions/alterations to existing buildings. Elements to consider include size, style and type of finish.
20. The re-use of early materials, decorative features, door and windows in new works is encouraged.
21. Traditional construction materials in recognisable traditional forms is encouraged (i.e. timber, glass and cast iron). Use of other materials should be in a manner that does not detract from the visual qualities and amenity values of the town centre. Where decoration and architectural features are used, they should follow the characteristic forms and details of the existing buildings.

4.6 Foxton Tourism Overlay Area

The following Guidelines in Section 4.6 only apply to the Foxton Tourism Overlay Area and no other areas.

22. The majority of parking would be provided on-street with no or limited on-site parking provided. Where parking is provided on-site, the parking area(s) should be located behind or beside buildings and not dominate the street frontage.
23. Where practicable the existing heritage buildings within this Overlay Area should be protected and retained.
24. New vehicular and pedestrian through street block connections should be created between Main Street and Harbour Street. These connections should be at regular intervals and provide for increased movement and accessibility.
25. The maximum size of individual buildings should not exceed 500m² in gross floor area to avoid large buildings dominating the area. The building forms should be broken up and have sufficient separation distances between buildings to provide a level of spaciousness.
26. All buildings are to be orientated to face the street frontage (Main Street, Wharf Street and Harbour Street). Building frontages should include a minimum level of glazing (windows and doors) of at least 60% of the total ground floor frontage area. No buildings are to include blank walls facing the street.



View from Harbour Street through driveway to Main Street



De Molen Windmill, Main Street, Foxton

27. The De Molen Windmill is a local landmark. Development in the Foxton Tourism Overlay Area in close proximity to the windmill should carefully respect their relationship by maintaining direct visual aspect (views) and public access to the windmill.
28. All development should maintain and create a safe environment through the application of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques.

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