

## Public art and built amenities policy

### Why do we need a public art policy?

Plimmerton community has been consulted widely in the process of developing the first Village Plan in 2004 and the subsequent survey in 2010. Through this process a number of facilities and improvements were suggested to enhance people's enjoyment and understanding of the local environment.

Many of these projects have been completed - with a focus on enhancing the promenade around the waterfront. These include the paved outdoor area around the shops, the timber pedestrian walkway and macrocarpa benches around Beach Road and development of seating and landscaped picnic areas around the Plimmerton waterfront. These measures have allowed greater opportunities for people to enjoy the coast, beaches and views in comfort and safety.

Restoration of the historic railway station has increased travel comfort for commuters and visitors, aesthetically improved the village entrance and forged a link with this community's past.

Installation of galvanised fencing, with reed and flax themed designs, has improved safety for people enjoying the paved areas by the shops and in the rail underpass while enhancing those areas and reflecting the area's natural history.

*This policy aims to ensure that planned and future developments are consistent with the style, quality and standards already set to create an integrated appearance throughout Plimmerton.*

*It covers all structures in public places including walls, screens, fences, signage, seating, street furniture, picnic furniture, landscaped recreation areas, sculptures, murals, paving and water features.*

This list is not exclusive - there may be other elements to be considered under this policy which includes all forms of public art.

## **What is public art?**

For the purposes of this policy public art is defined broadly to include all art forms, located in, or associated with, public spaces in the Plimmerton area.

This includes functional art (like the seats around the coastline, the paving and barriers around 'cafe corner') in public places, decorative elements and landscaping. Functional artworks are installed and maintained on behalf of the community by Porirua City Council so must meet all required standards set by them.

Design, production and location of public art often involves collaboration between landscape architects, artists of different types, urban and roading/traffic designers and other professionals working for associated organisations (like Kiwi Rail, Land Transport NZ, Greater Wellington Regional Council ) as well as specialist manufacturers.

Public art should be designed by professionals for use in public spaces. This means that public safety is integral to the design, maintenance cost has been factored in over a ten year (or longer) life, installation costs are calculated and agreed, the item adds to people's appreciation and understanding of Plimmerton's natural and cultural context, and the item has been deemed to be of a high design standard, of appropriate materials and quality production by designated specialists.

*Public art includes all areas of functional art and structures in public spaces or in areas accessible by the public as well as decorative features.*

## **How will having this policy help us?**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- Focus is kept on the natural environment, particularly the coastline and beaches. Any developments must be unobtrusive and facilitate enjoyment of these areas in comfort and safety.
- Functional art proposed will be consistent with the style already established to create an integrated aesthetic. New developments will use the same materials and design standards to 'fit' into their surrounding context. By definition, art for art's sake will not occur indiscriminately around Plimmerton.

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- Any developments made will be to enhance appreciation and enjoyment of this area's natural and cultural environment where indigenous flora and fauna is encouraged to thrive.
- Safety and accessibility for residents and visitors remains paramount
- Residents will appreciate and understand developments as they occur as part of the approved village plan - as detailed on the web site [www.plimmerton.org.nz](http://www.plimmerton.org.nz)
- All proposed public art will be subject to approval using the process detailed in this policy.

## What are the styles already set in Plimmerton?

In the development of public functional art in Plimmerton there has been a consistent use of materials and design, selected for their relevance to this area and its natural and cultural history. Materials must be robust to withstand the coastal environment.

Materials include the use of solid timber edging in the paving elements and seating along the promenade. Galvanised metal has been used to create reed and flax motif balustrades to reflect the indigenous plants and history of the area. These barriers are strong but visually light to contain people but allow views through. Any new elements such as balustrades and signage stands will be consistent with this style and material.

The award winning *Matau* seats on the promenade in Beach Road feature weathered concrete in an adze shape with seating 'wrapped' in wood (as in rope). These were designed by Massey University industrial design students and constructed by specialist craftsmen. The seats blend into the environment where they are situated and tell something of the area's history.

The *End of the line* seats at the entrance to Plimmerton by the railway line use metal railway tracks and solid timber slats. These materials complement those used elsewhere and the theme reflects Plimmerton's important rail history.

Another example is the colour scheme used in the paint work of the refurbished railway station and the shops in the village. Soft pastel shades have been used which reflect the natural hues of rocks and sea and to stay true to the heritage of historic buildings in Plimmerton.

## Criteria for commissioning or accepting gifts of public art

Where the PRA wishes to commission work or run design competitions for public art they would work with a recognised designer or institution, as was done with the seating design competition with Massey University. Generally, functional public art works are designed by specialist urban designers familiar with the conditions in this area and with any relevant regulations covering public art.

## What is the process?

***All developments will be evaluated according to these eight major criteria:***

***Public safety*** - there is a wide range of legislation covering public safety with art works in the public realm. These considerations are paramount when a design is being proposed.

- ***Maintenance and installation*** - the cost of installing a piece of street furniture or other structure to a safe and robust standard can be significant. Porirua City Council will require at minimum, a ten year maintenance plan to be submitted with accurate costings. As PCC are responsible for maintaining any piece of functional public art during its lifetime then they need to know what will be expected and what it will cost their operational budgets. Arrangements for replacement of damaged parts and repairs need to be covered.
- ***Location*** - many spots are covered by regulations involving other organisations (rail, roading, utilities, etc.) and negotiation and even legal assistance can be required to gain use of any desired location. For reasons of public safety a desired location may not be able to be used. Any proposed work must be relevant to its location.
- ***Relevance*** - any art work should enhance understanding and enjoyment of the area where it is located. It must reflect natural or cultural values pertinent to Plimmerton and its specific location within the village.
- ***Materials*** - any future developments must complement the palette of materials and design elements already established to create consistency.

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- ***Vandalism and tagging proofing*** - works must be able to withstand the determined efforts of vandals and be able to be cost effectively repaired if tagged or intentionally damaged. Council may insist on certain coatings or processes to make this easier.
- ***Quality and diversity*** -the merits of any public art work will be assessed by PCC (with the PRA and nominated professional advisors) to see that it meets all the above criteria and that it is of good design and sound production to stand up to the rigours of public use.
- ***Fit*** - any new elements must fit in the existing context in relation to purpose and materials and proximity to other elements already in the vicinity.

## How does it work?

Where functional art is being developed, designs solicited in a competition or when works are offered to the community the same process will be followed.

- The criteria outlined above will be considered.
- Proposals must be submitted including designs and specifications to illustrate how these points are to be addressed.
- Proposals will be considered by a PRA subcommittee, and PCC representatives with input from appropriate nominated specialists.

***All projects proposed will follow the system outlined in this policy to ensure they are relevant, consistent, meaningful, safe, easily maintained, vandal-resistant, and lead to greater understanding and enjoyment of our unique environment.***

We welcome feedback on this draft policy. Please email your ideas to

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