# Winchelsea Town Centre and Highway Design Guidelines

## Prepared by Inclusive Design July 2019



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Winchelsea Town Centre and Highway Design Guidelines

Winchelsea has a distinctive and valued country town character. These guidelines have been prepared to ensure new commercial development can respect, reflect and enhance that character. The guidelines are divided into four parts;

#### Part 1

The background and development of the guidelines

How to use the guidelines and where they apply

#### Part 2

What is Winchelsea's preferred character?

The aspects of development that are important for achieving the preferred character in the areas covered by the guidelines.

#### Part 3

Design guidelines for key areas in the town centre;

- Town Centre East
- Willis Street
- · Town Centre West
- Riverside

#### Part 4

Advice on managing buildings to support this preferred character

## Part 1 Background

In 2015, Surf Coast Shire Council adopted the strategic plan 'Growing Winchelsea', a place- making plan to guide the way Winchelsea grows heading towards 2050. It defined a vision for Winchelsea as "a welcoming and thriving village with a rich cultural heritage and country village feel. The residents of Winchelsea benefit from a full range of activities and access to learning, employment, civic and cultural experiences, whilst living in a place that has a strong connection to the beautiful Barwon River and rural hinterland."

To achieve this vision it laid out a series of aims. These are to:

- Celebrate the Barwon River as an accessible natural asset, a place to play with riverside trails.
- Be an authentic country village with a village heart, rural streetscapes, a connection to agriculture and a village high street.
- Celebrate and protect its rich cultural heritage A unique town identity, new respects old, welcome signage, heritage gardens, heritage replica street elements and restore old buildings.
- Offer activities for old and young festivals and events, family days out and markets.

These design guidelines were prepared to ensure that new commercial buildings are compatible with this vision.

We presented our initial findings about the broad direction for guidelines to the community through a number of channels. These included two community events as well as on line opportunities to comment. These allowed residents and business owners to express their views about the intent and scope of guidelines and our interpretation of the preferred character.

This process revealed broad support for the intent of the draft guidelines and allowed us to identify what required amending.

These changes have been incorporated into this document to articulate what Winchelsea's preferred character is and how it can be achieved.

## About the design guidelines

Like many characterful towns Winchelsea contains a number of areas with subtly different character. These guidelines reflect these differences and suggests different controls in different areas. Also as is common with most other towns there is a degree of variation within each character area . Some characteristics are largely consistent throughout an area (for example height) whilst some may vary considerably (for example colour). For this reason the guidelines includes alternatives where more than one design solution may be appropriate in a particular area.

The guidelines seek to impose no more controls than are necessary to support the towns preferred character. This is to allow good and innovative design to flourish and minimise constraints. Consequently these guidelines are limited to those aspects of development that are considered most important for the towns preferred character. The guidelines seek to invite the passer by in the car to stop, get out and enjoy the town. Thus the guidelines key focus is to emphasise the experience of the town from the perspective of the pedestrian on the footpath. Consequently the guidelines do not seek to control aspects of development where they do not have a significant visual impact on key streetscapes.

Innovative design may justify a departure the guidelines where it can be demonstrated that a new development will be compatible with the preferred character. For example two storey development in a single storey area may be appropriate where the impact of the upper storey is mitigated by an appropriate setback that renders it visually unobtrusive.

As is common in even the most characterful towns, not all existing buildings contribute to the towns preferred character. Therefore the presence of an existing non conforming building in any given part of the town will not provide a precedent for another building that also does not contribute to the preferred character.



## Using the design guidelines

These guidelines outline what is required to ensure new development contributes to the towns preferred character across five distinct areas as outlined on the map. These are;

- The Princes highway (where commercial type development is proposed)
- Town Centre East
- Willis Street
- · Town Centre West
- Riverside

The guidelines identify the aspects of development that are particularly important, why they are important and the design requirements to achieve the preferred character. Development that conforms to these guidelines will be deemed to meet character standards.

The guidelines should be used to lead discussions between applicants for development and Council officers. Applicants need to consider whether their proposal conforms to these guidelines. If you wish to pursue a design that departs from these guidelines you will have demonstrate to the satisfaction of the assessing officer how the proposed design exceeds that of a conforming design and contributes to the towns preferred character. Please note all of these guidelines are considered equally important.

#### Information to accompany applications for development

All applications for development covered by the design guidelines must be accompanied by an assessment of the proposal against these guidelines.

#### How will the Council use these guidelines to make a decision?

The responsible authority must assess whether the proposal meets these guidelines before deciding on any application. Developments that incorporate the characteristics indicated as appropriate in these guidelines are likely to be deemed to comply.

The guidelines use a traffic light system to demonstrate compliance;



Any of the features with green circle and tick comply



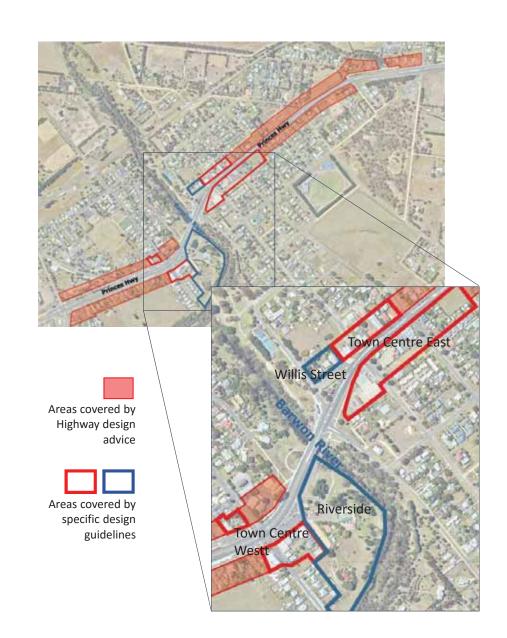
Features with amber circle- deviates from the preferred character but may be appropriate subject to detailed design



Features with red circle and cross - does not comply

#### **Further information**

Applicants are strongly advised to contact the Surf Coast Shire Planning department before finalising their proposals. To find out more about this and other requirements, or to book a pre-application meeting, contact the Planning department on 5261 0600 or planningapps@surfcoast.vic.gov.au.



## Part 2 Winchelsea's preferred

character

In order that new commercial buildings in the areas outlined on page 3 contribute to Winchelsea's preferred character they will need to (in no hierarchical order):

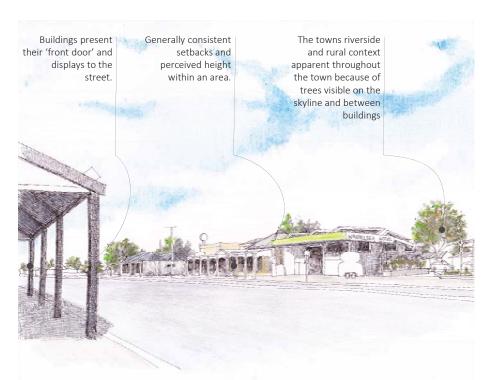
Maintain human scale. A key defining characteristic of most country towns are their relatively small scale and an absence of big or massive buildings that overwhelm the observer and dominate their surroundings. The preferred character for Winchelsea is to maintain this human scale by ensuring buildings are not too large, too high or too massive when viewed from the footpath. It also requires they present to the street front to ensure as people walk or drive by they are presented with a rich and interesting streetscape with a close grain (such as narrow shopfronts) rather than a monolithic wall or single dominating feature.

Respect the characteristic pattern of development. Each new building sits within a context of other existing buildings, the street and in some cases the river. In some areas the buildings characteristically directly edge the back of the footpath and are hard up against each other (known as zero setbacks). In other areas the buildings are setback from the footpath and each other. This contributes to a characteristic pattern of building and gaps, revealing the sides of buildings in some places and hiding them in others. In most areas these setbacks, where they exist are within a range and are rarely entirely consistent. The preferred character for Winchelsea is to ensure new development respects the characteristic range of front and side setbacks within its immediate surroundings. The guidelines have established four distinctive areas within the town centre and identified the preferred setback for each precinct.

Respect and enhance the contribution of landscape. The wooded Barwon river and rural hinterland means that trees contribute a great deal to the character of the area. Tree canopy is visible between buildings and in some cases in front of them in much of the town. The preferred character for Winchelsea is to ensure the balance between buildings and landscape can be retained and if possible the contribution of landscape can be enhanced. Landscaping will be particularly significant in precincts 2 and 4.

Respect the contribution of heritage buildings. Winchelsea's heritage buildings offer a link to the past and contribute a great deal to the character of the town, particularly in terms of the towns skyline and architectural richness. The preferred character of new buildings is to ensure the parapet, wall height or roof height of new development does not compete with, dilute or overwhelm the contribution made by heritage buildings. This requires ensuring the facades of new buildings are not as high as adjoining heritage buildings.

What this means for development is outlined in the following sections of this document.



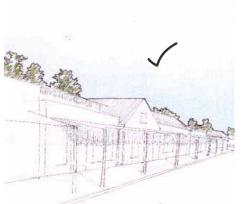
Ensuring Winchelsea achieve its preferred character goals will require human scale buildings offering interest to the passer by, that respect characteristic pattern of development and allow the surrounding landscape to be contribute (above) and that allow heritage buildings to enjoy prominence (right)



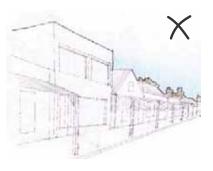
## Key aspects of development and design responses

This section outlines the aspects of development that are important to achieve Winchelsea's preferred character and the appropriate design responses in all five character areas.

| 2011               |  | Appropriate and  |  |
|--------------------|--|--|--|
| What is            | Why it is important  | inappropriate design   |  |
| important          |  | responses  |  |
| Building<br>Height | Limiting height of new development will help ensure:  new buildings are sympathetic to the existing 'human scale' of the town  Trees will continue to be the main feature on the skyline when viewed from the highway  The impact that taller buildings will have is | Buildings should be no higher than surrounding buildings in the area. Exceptions may be made when a higher building can be demonstrated to have minimised the impact of levels above ground level, typically by stepping back first floors or incorporating them into the roofscape.  For height requirements in areas 1-4 see |  |
|                    | reserved for heritage buildings with a particularly significant function for the community   | following section  |  |
| Building placement | The setbacks between a building and the property boundaries to the front and the side make a significant contribution to the pattern and rhythm of development in an   | New buildings should respect the characteristic front and side setbacks in the area.   |  |
|                    | area.  | For setbacks requirements in areas 1-4 see following section   |  |
| Roof design        | The design of the roof will make a significant impact on the skyline and make  | New buildings should incorporate a pitched and ridged roof.  |  |
|                    | an important contribution to the pattern and rhythm of development in an area  | For roof design requirements in areas 1-4 see following section  |  |
| Materials          | The materials and colours of buildings have a significant impact on what it is like  | Outside of areas 1-4 no particular controls on materials and colours are required  |  |
| and colours        | to walk past them. This contribution was   | because of the existing diversity of these   |  |
|                    | noted in the findings of the community survey in Winchelsea about community  | aspects of development along the Highway   |  |
|                    | aspirations for the towns character undertaken late 2018   | For material and colour requirements in areas 1-4 see following section  |  |
| Advertising        | It is the point of advertising to draw the<br>eye and it plays an important role in<br>supporting local businesses. However too<br>much or too dominant advertising will<br>dominate the towns built and landscape   | Advertising should be incorporated into the building or a panel hanging off it. Advertising that crosses the skyline when viewed from the Highway is unlikely to be appropriated   |  |
|                    | character  | Advertising that is illuminated internally is unlikely to be appropriate   |  |

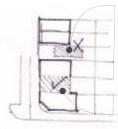


Building heights and roofscapes contribute to the characteristic mixed pattern of landscape and buildings on the skyline, with landscapes dominating,



Taller buildings and large slab roof shapes would change the skyline balance and lead to buildings dominating, detracting from the towns character

Typical building placement in character areas 1-4



Building not in keeping with prevailing setbacks in the area, likely to create a gap in the streetscape. This would only be justifiable if that gap makes a significant contribution to the landscape quality or activation of that part of Winchelsea.

Building in keeping with prevailing setbacks in the area

Typical building placement along the Princes Highway outside of character areas 1-4



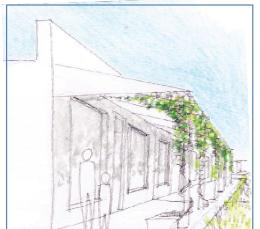
Building in keeping with prevailing setbacks in the area

Building not in keeping with prevailing setbacks in the area, leaving a gap in the streetscape and dominating the street front with parking

Building not in keeping with prevailing setbacks in the area. It is unlikely to be appropriate because of its prominence. However an exceptionally well designed building in keeping with these guidelines may justify the high profile such a building will have.

| 14/h - 4 :-               |  | Appropriate and   |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| What is                   | Why it is important  | inappropriate design  |
| important                 | , .  | responses   |
| Windows                   | The shape and distribution of windows on the facade will play a significant role in ensuring new buildings look like they were intended for a country town and not just imposed on the town from elsewhere   | Window shape on commercial development<br>may consist of vertical orientated windows,<br>large display windows or a mix of both.<br>Extensive areas of glass, particularly on wider<br>frontages are unlikely to be appropriate.<br>Equally blank facades will not be appropriate   |
|                           | Internally illuminated windows facing<br>the footpath contribute to making the<br>town a safer and more interesting<br>place to be.  | For window requirements in areas 1-4 see following section  |
| Articulation              | Country towns like Winchelsea have a<br>'close grain' which gives them a<br>human scale and makes them<br>interesting and attractive as well as<br>more rewarding to walk past rather<br>than just drive past. Large, unvaried,<br>blank walled or big box development<br>type development would detract from  | Variations in the height, colour, setback or modulation of buildings every 10m or at property boundaries for any lots less than 10m wide  Blank, unmodulated facades would not be appropriate  For articulation requirements in areas 1-4 see   |
|                           | this character and contribute to making the town more generic.   | following section   |
| Orientation               | Ensuring buildings are accessed from the street will make them easier to read from the highway, provide interest and activity to the street/highway. Entrances that can be seen from the surrounding public realm are more likely to feel safer than those that require pedestrians to enter via dark, hidden or secluded entrances  | Principal pedestrian entry point should be visible from the highway  Note this does not preclude other pedestrian entrances on other facades (such as those facing a car park)  For orientation requirements in areas 1-4 see following section   |
| Presentation<br>to street | Ensuring buildings present their active, attractive and 'business' face to the street will provide interest and help contribute to the vitality of the street/highway  Ensuring buildings are not dominated by car parking will create a more walkable character and provide more room for landscaping.  Development built up to the footpath can help provide microclimatic | Front setback (if any) to incorporate a tree that will mature to be tall enough to contribute to the skyline.  Front setbacks must not incorporate car parking.  Verandas are encouraged along the entire frontage of the development on the southern side of the highway and over either side where development abuts the footpath  Planting beds or raised beds adjoining Veranda |
|                           | comfort.   | posts to facilitate landscaping  For presentation to street requirements in areas 1-4 see following section   |

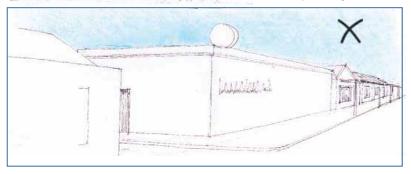




verandas on the street front façade make a particularly significant contribution to rural town

The installation of vines can contribute to making the building and footpath (where verandas cross path) comfortable in all weather conditions and add an element of greenery at eye level

Unarticulated, blank frontages do not contribute to the character of the town and make it placeless, generic.



## Part 3

Design guidelines for key areas

### Design Guidelines for Area 1 Town Centre East



This area contributes to the sense of arrival or departure from Winchelsea town centre for the traveller on the Highway. These guidelines seek to ensure this area can create the sense that visitors are arriving at somewhere distinctive, attractive and memorable.

On the north side of the highway it incorporates the lots between Austin Street and Harding Street plus one lot on the south west side of Harding Street.

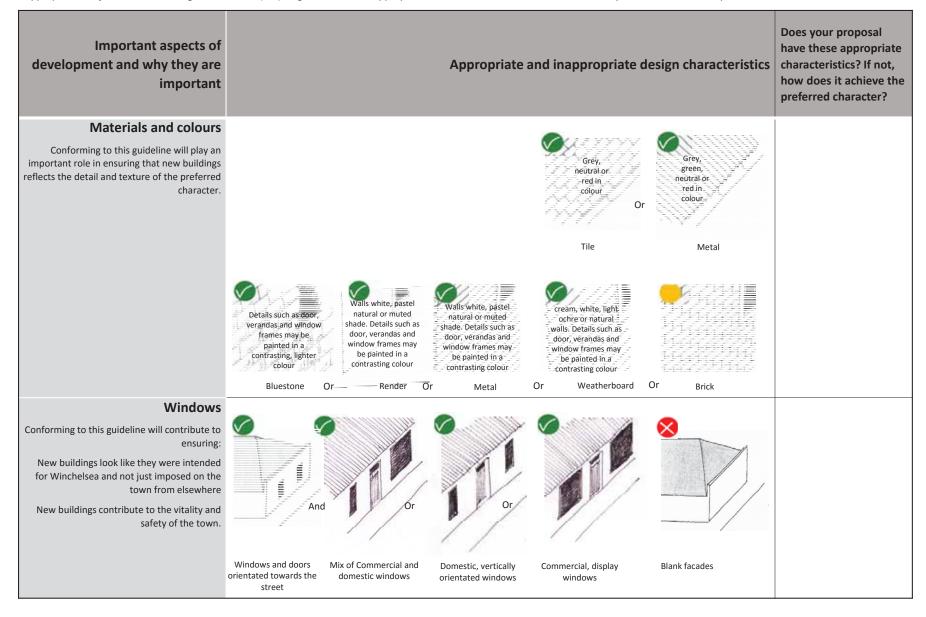
On the south side of the highway it incorporates the lots between Jackson Street and Barwon Terrace. The South western corner of this area has a high profile overlooking the Barwon River.

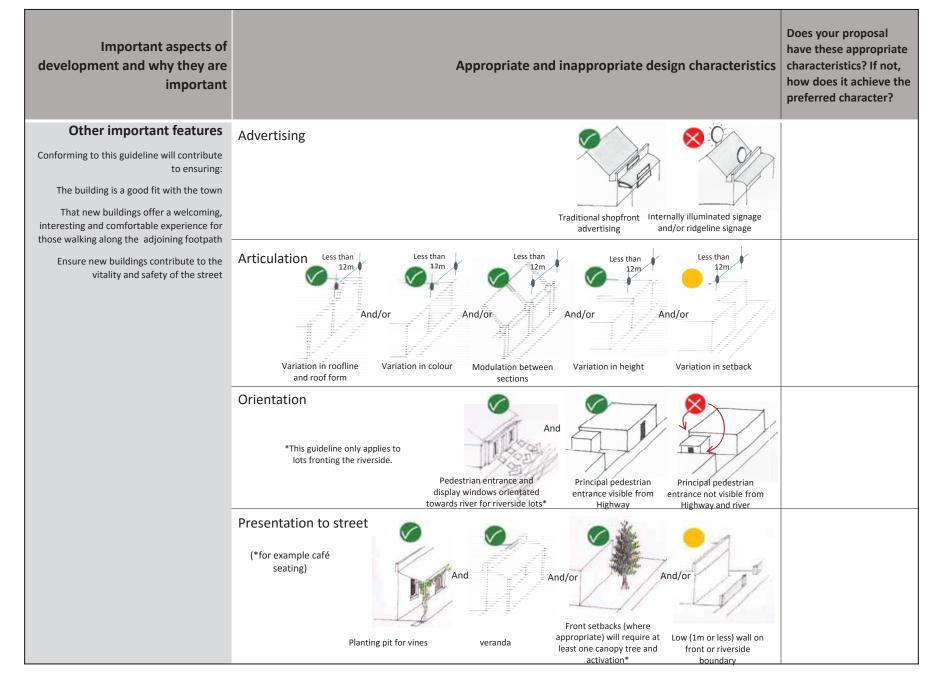


Indicative illustration of what buildings built in accordance with these guidelines would look like



| Important aspects of development and why they are important  | Appropriate and inappropriate design characteristics                           | Does your proposal<br>have these appropriate<br>characteristics? If not,<br>how does it achieve the<br>preferred character? |
|--|--|---|
| Building Height  |  |   |
| Conforming to this guideline will help ensure:   | Tat least 4m   |   |
| New buildings are sympathetic to the existing scale of the town  |  |   |
| Trees will continue to be the main feature on the skyline when viewed from the highway   | Or Or  |   |
| The impact that taller buildings will have is reserved for buildings with a particularly significant function for the community  | 6  |   |
| Building placement   |  |   |
| Conforming to this guideline will contribute to ensuring:  New buildings respect the villages characteristic pattern of development  |  |   |
| Roof design  Conforming to this guideline will contribute to ensuring:  New buildings reinforce Winchelsea's country town skyline and close grain  Trees are retained as the dominant feature on | And/or And/or  |   |
| the skyline when viewed from the highway   | Ridge parallel to front Ridge perpendicular Hipped Parapet Gable Flat to front |   |



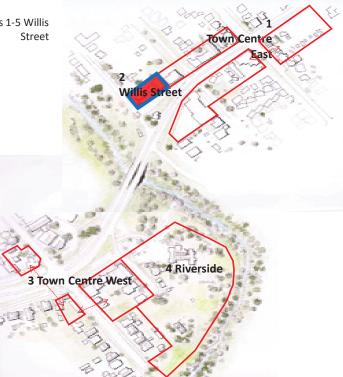


### Design Guidelines for Area 2 Willis Street

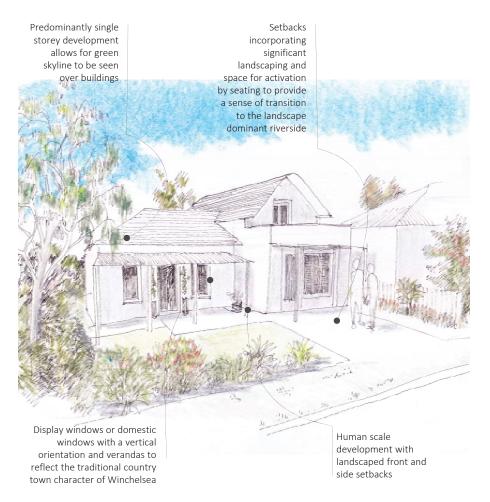


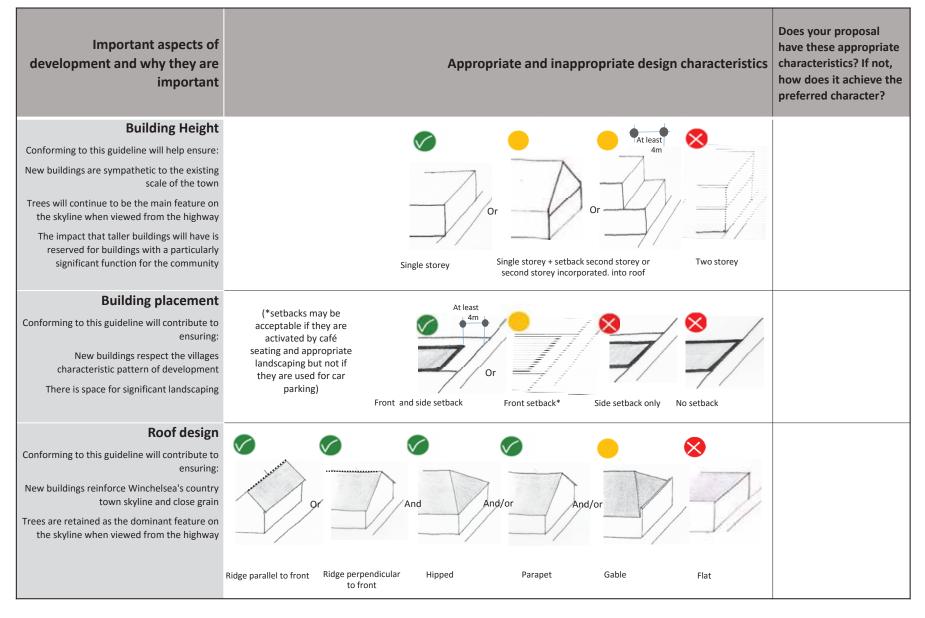
This area differs from area 1 in that it doesn't directly abut the highway, instead it relates more to the river and its landscaped setting and so it functions as a transition between the town centre and the river. These guidelines seek to ensure that development in this area can provide an attractive edge to both the town and the river.

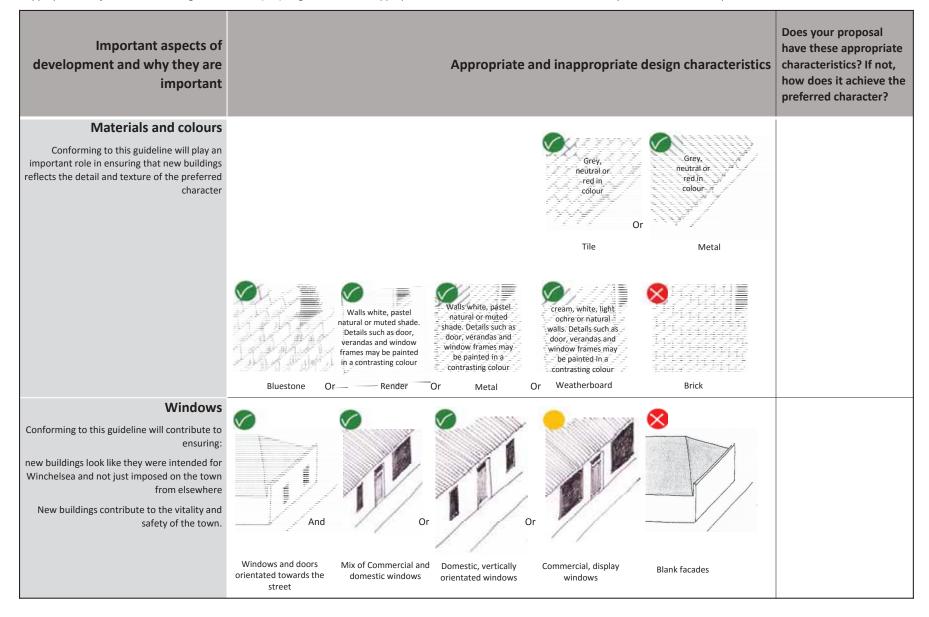
This area incorporates 1-5 Willis

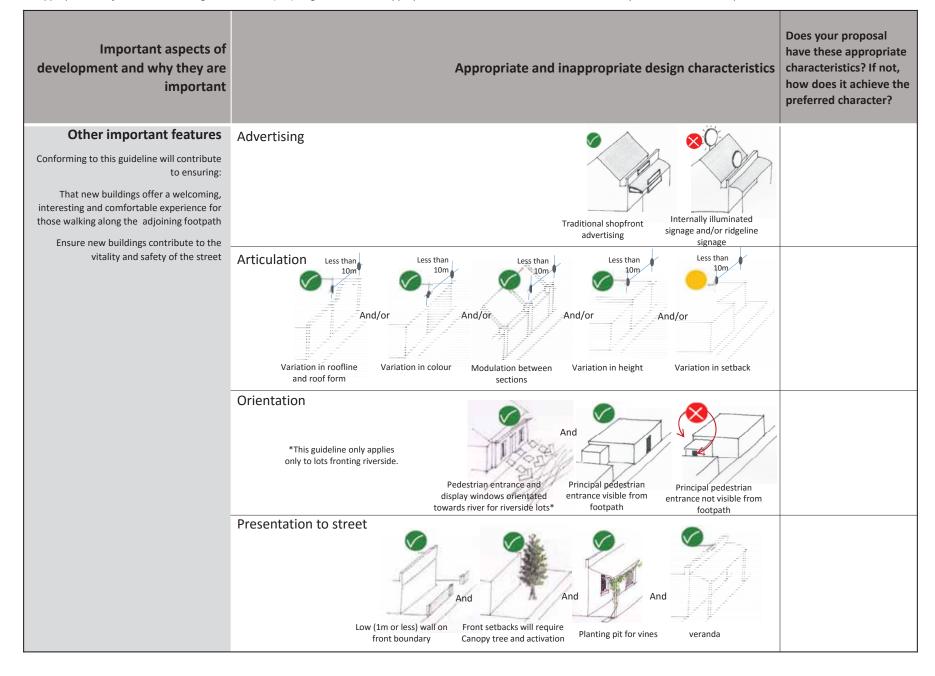


#### Indicative illustration of what a building or buildings built in accordance with these guidelines would look like









### Design Guidelines for Area 3 Town Centre West



This area is the heart of the town.
These guidelines seek to ensure this area can be developed in a way that visitors and locals will find distinctive, attractive and memorable and a rewarding place

to spend some time.

It incorporates the following lots:

On the south side of Main Street those between Hesse Street and Palmer Street.

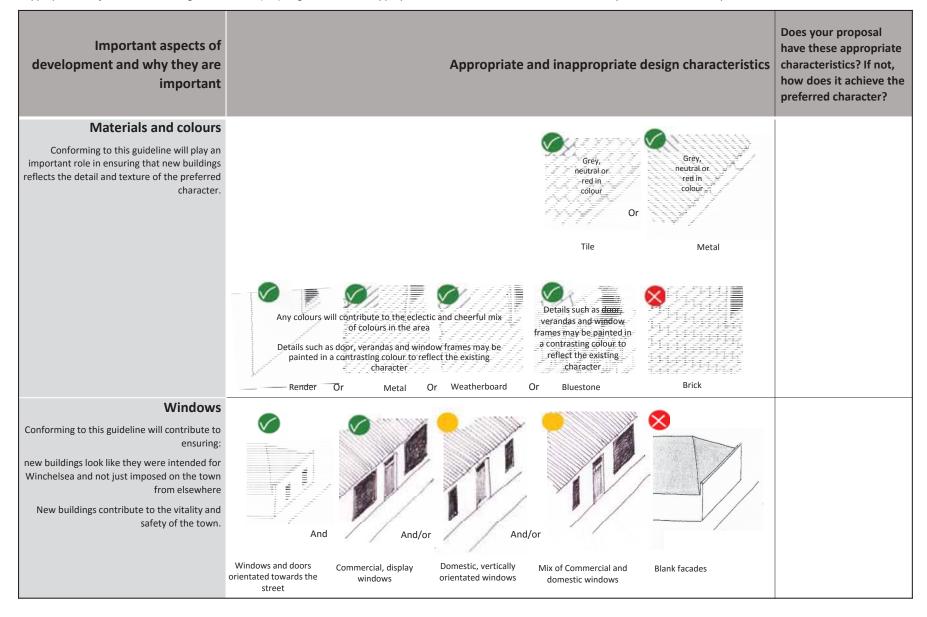
On Hesse Street the lots between Rowan Lane and Main Street and the lots indicated on the plan on the north side of the Highway

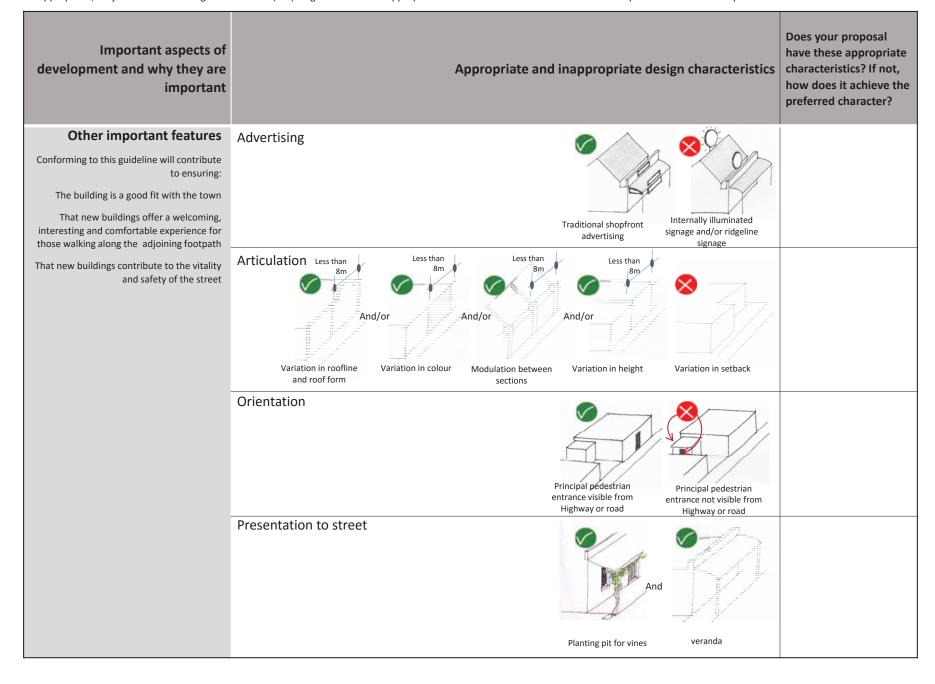
3 Town Centre West

4 Riverside



| Important aspects of development and why they are important   | Appropriate and inappropriate design characteristics   | Does your proposal<br>have these appropriate<br>characteristics? If not,<br>how does it achieve the<br>preferred character? |
|---|--|---|
| Building Height  Conforming to this guideline will help ensure:  New buildings are sympathetic to the existing scale of the town  Trees will continue to be the main feature on   | At least 2m  |   |
| the skyline when viewed from the highway  The impact that taller buildings will have is reserved for buildings with a particularly significant function for the community   | Single storey Single storey + setback second storey or second storey incorporated. into roof   |   |
| Building placement  Conforming to this guideline will contribute to ensuring:  New buildings respect the villages characteristic pattern of development   | (*setbacks may be acceptable if they are activated by café seating for example but not if used for car parking)  No setback  Front setback*  Side setback only  Front and side setback |   |
| Roof design  Conforming to this guideline will contribute to ensuring:  New buildings reinforce Winchelsea's country town skyline and close grain  Trees are retained as the dominant feature on the skyline when viewed from the highway | And And/or And/or  |   |
|   | Ridge parallel to front Ridge perpendicular Hipped Parapet Gable Flat to front   |   |





### Design Guidelines for Area 4 Riverside



This area has been identified for expansion of the town centre and open space.

Development in this area will activate and attract visitors to experience the beautiful Barwon River setting. Development will be required to respond sensitively to the surrounding open space, retain the dominance of the landscape and provide an attractive edge to both the town and the river.

This area covers the land indicated on the map below



Area liable to flooding (based on 2019 mapping, please check planning scheme for most up to date area)

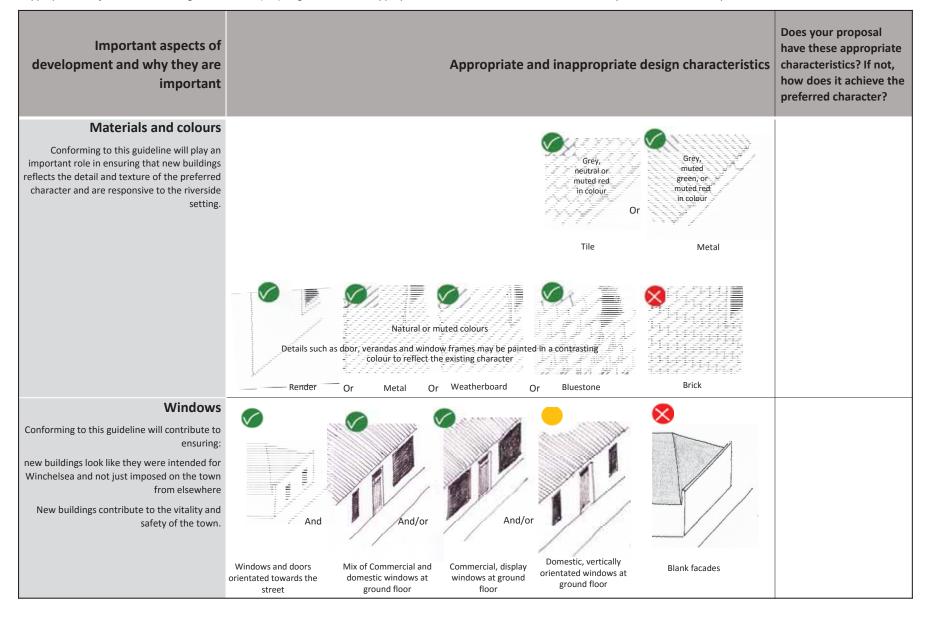
### Indicative illustration of what buildings built in accordance with these guidelines would look like

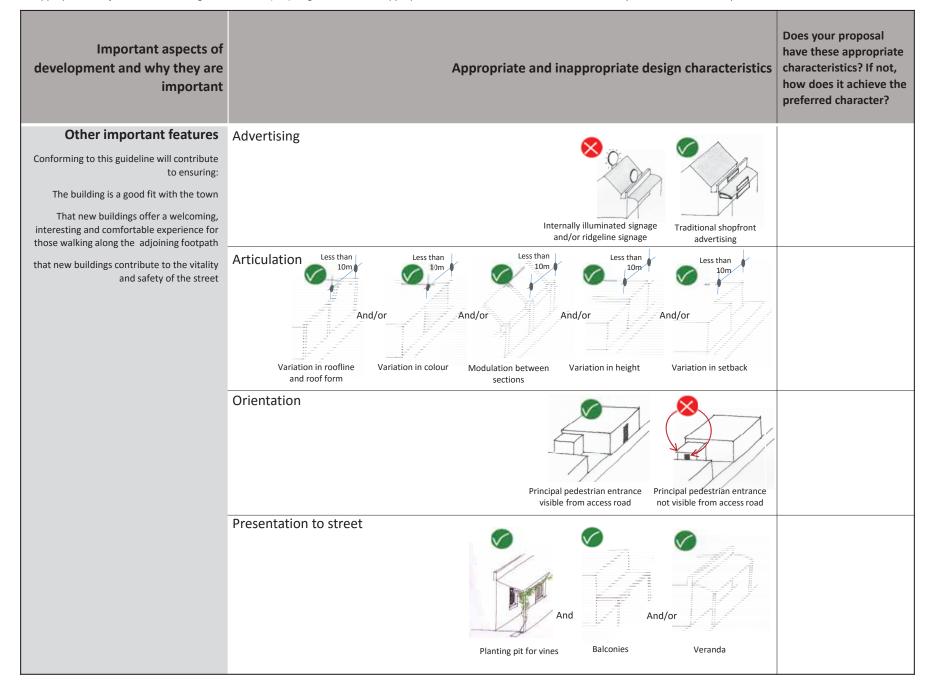


verandas and balconies to break up the mass of the building Significant landscaping in activated front and side setbacks

Development fronting towards riverside open space and slow speed, pedestrian friendly access road linking Hesse Street and Palmer Street

| Important aspects of development and why they are important   | Appropriate and inappropriate design characteristics  | Does your proposal<br>have these appropriate<br>characteristics? If not,<br>how does it achieve the<br>preferred character? |
|---|---|---|
| Building Height  Conforming to this guideline will help ensure:  New buildings are sympathetic to the existing scale of the town  Trees will continue to be the main feature on the skyline when viewed from the highway  The impact that taller buildings will have is reserved for buildings with a particularly significant function for the community | Or Or Or Or Or Single storey + setback second storey or second storey incorporated. into roof   |   |
| Building placement  Conforming to this guideline will contribute to ensuring:  New buildings are focussed on the Barwon River   | *setbacks will require appropriate landscaping and activation such as café seating. Setbacks used for car parking will not be acceptable  Front and side setback  Front setback*  Side setback only  No setback |   |
| Roof design  Conforming to this guideline will contribute to ensuring:  New buildings reinforce Winchelsea's country town skyline and close grain   | Ridge parallel to front Ridge perpendicular to front  |   |





### Part 4

Managing buildings to contribute to character and amenity

The design of development is not the only factor that will impact upon the amenity and character of Winchelsea. How we manage these buildings once they are built will also have a significant impact on how attractive, distinctive and liveable the town is. The ideas on this page relate to how you might manage your development in order to maximise the contribution that appropriately designed development might make following construction.

| Important aspects of development and why they are important   | Appropriate and inappropriate management techniques  | Will your proposal<br>be managed in a<br>way that<br>incorporates these<br>appropriate design<br>techniques? |
|---|--|--|
| Managing the building when its built  Adopting these management techniques will contribute to ensuring:  That new buildings offer a welcoming, and interesting experience for those walking along the adjoining footpath  That new buildings contribute to the vitality and safety of the street  That landscape and nature can make a significant contribution to the towns character  Microclimatic comfort is maintained | Display that allow people to look in and out from street  Canopy tree in front setback (where appropriate) in accordance with guidelines  Seturity shutters  Windows obscured by stock or advertising when viewed from street  Install and tend raised beds landscaping pits |  |
|   | Lighting  Lighting under verandas unilluminated entrances  |  |