

# Installing a Memorial Headstone

**Cemetery headstones are a focus for mourning and remembrance and have a heritage value to a community, documenting the lives of our earlier residents.**

## Who is responsible for erecting a memorial plaque or headstone at the Council cemeteries?

The owner of the cemetery plot (Exclusive Right of Interment), or if that person is deceased, the next of kin or executor of the deceased's estate can authorise the erection of a memorial plaque or headstone.

## What size memorial or headstone can be installed?

There are restrictions on the height and width of memorial allowed. Specifications are available from Customer Services.

The memorial headstones are placed on the concrete berm and the edge of the concrete berm forms a mowing strip between the headstone and the grass.

Where two graves are situated side-by-side, a shared memorial or headstone may be centred between the two plots. This may not be possible in the shaped ashes gardens.

As the cemeteries are maintained in a lawn cemetery style with the grassed areas mown using ride-on mowers, no memorial may encroach onto the concrete mowing strip or grass area.

Containers for cut or artificial flowers must be situated within the berm area, clear of the concrete mowing strip and the grass.

In the Services Cemetery, only the standard bronze plaque or headstone supplied by Veterans Affairs is permitted.

## What type of material can we use?

A monumental mason will advise on the most suitable materials for the conditions.



Durable materials like granite are popular as they are able to endure the elements over a long period of time.

Schist is not suitable as it splits off easily into flakes or slabs.

Approval of alternative materials is at the discretion of the Council and will depend on durability and compatibility with the cemetery environment. Concrete work is not to be painted or colour-tinted.

## Are there restrictions on memorial details?

No inscription (including photographs, images or text) is permitted on the reverse side of the memorial.

Messages that could be offensive to other cemetery users will not be approved.

Company logos or other commercial branding is not permitted except for the branding of the monumental mason who created the memorial.

*Note: Planting is not permitted in the berm or in the lawn or garden areas around the grave site.*

*Please turn over*

## **What is the process for installing a memorial or headstone?**

A permit must be obtained prior to the installation of any memorial or headstone or any changes to an existing memorial. Application for a permit is made on an "Application for Memorial Permit" form, available from the Council or Monumental Masons. The permit fee is paid with the application.

Memorials or headstones must be installed by an approved Monumental Mason or Stone Mason. Installation by other qualified persons is at the discretion of the Council.

Generally the Monumental Mason will look after the permit process for you.

If a memorial is being installed prior to an ashes interment taking place, we will require a warrant to inter to be completed, and an estimated interment date. A warrant to inter must be issued by the Council prior to any burial in a Council cemetery.

## **Are temporary grave markers permitted?**

**The Council does not provide temporary grave markers.**

Funeral Directors may provide temporary grave markers in the form of a cross (up to 500 mm in height) for a period of up to one year prior to a permanent memorial being placed. After one year from the date of the burial, temporary grave markers are removed.

This is the only type of temporary grave marker permitted.

## **If there is a second burial in the plot can another memorial or headstone be installed?**

No. Only one memorial or headstone per plot is permitted. If subsequent interments are anticipated when the memorial is designed, space should be left for additional details. If there is no space on the headstone, a small supplementary plaque may be permitted.

## **Who is responsible for looking after the memorial or plaque?**

The owner of the cemetery plot (Exclusive Right of Interment), or if the owner is deceased, the immediate next of kin is responsible for maintaining the memorial plaque or headstone in good condition.

Any changes to the installed headstone must be approved by the Council.

The Council does not accept any responsibility for damage or vandalism to the monuments unless such damage is proven to be the direct result of negligence by the Council's contractor.

## **Can we have a plant or other memorabilia at the grave site?**

To maintain the overall cemetery environment for the benefit of all users, grave memorabilia that does not comply with the standard memorial or headstone specifications is not permitted, and will be removed.

Planting is not permitted in the berm or in the lawn or garden areas around the grave sites. An ornamental rose may be permitted in the ashes gardens at Rangiora if there is space.

Please ensure that any containers for fresh or artificial flowers are contained within the berm area, clear of the concrete mowing strip and the grass. Objects of value are left at the cemetery at your own risk.

## **Where veterans are interred in the general sections of the cemetery, can we install a bronze veterans plaque in addition to a headstone?**

A Veterans Affairs plaque may be installed next to a headstone for returned service persons interred in areas outside the Services Cemetery area.

**Find out more at [waimakariri.govt.nz](http://waimakariri.govt.nz) or contact Customer Services on 0800 965 468.**