

Media Release

Foxton, 1 February, 2012

De Molen puts Wind in the Sails of Te Awahou – Nieuwe Stroom

A permanent national home in Foxton for the culture and heritage of the Dutch community in New Zealand is the joint vision of Michael Feyen, Chairman of De Molen Trust and Ben Vanderkolk, Chairman of Te Awahou – Nieuwe Stroom Trust (TANS).

Their recent conversation, about greater collaboration between the two Trusts, occurred as TANS is set to present a radically refined plan to the Horowhenua District Council for the redevelopment of the former Mitre 10 building in Foxton, next to the 17th century replica Dutch windmill.

The TANS concept involves a raft of activities that is offered to the public, tourists, visitors and the local community – in a coordinated way. It is acknowledged that de Molen is doing this already, but currently on its own. Through better planning and joint activities, both De Molen and TANS will benefit from increased patronage and visitors to the planned Dutch museum centre, the Maori Arts and Crafts Gallery, a library and community service centre, an I-Site visitor information centre and a kiosk for river activities – which can all be housed by TANS within the existing Mitre 10 building.

The authentic, working Dutch windmill is a key component of the project. With some 30,000 visitors annually, it is a landmark and a destination of considerable interest – now being augmented by the Dutch Market on State Highway 1 and plans for a Dutch bakery and an authentic Dutch café.

“We now have more comfort that we can protect De Molen and work with TANS to make a shared vision for Foxton a reality,” said Mr Feyen. Mr Vanderkolk confirmed that de Molen Trust believes that the refined plan for TANS is sustainable and it can be done because it is much less ambitious and less complicated than earlier versions presented to Council.

Both Trusts will consider urgently the appointment of cross-trustees to ensure that clear communication and full disclosure occurs more effectively. Moreover, both Chairmen are convinced that this initiative is capable of strengthening the support for the project by the local and national Dutch community, and will build an asset that brings pride and employment opportunities to the Foxton community.

Together with another settlor of the TANS Trust, the Dutch Connection Museum Trust, the parties to the discussion over the weekend see key elements of a Dutch village in a Dutch landscape – with a wide river and plenty of Friesian cows in the paddocks – emerging in Foxton, centered on de Molen.

Editors only: For more information, contact Michael Feyen on 027 441 9923, or Ben VanderKolk on 021 432 280, or visit www.tans.org.nz