

GEOGRAPHIC NAMING POLICY

This policy complies with the Charter of Human Rights legislation

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GEOGRAPHIC NAMING

Implementation of this policy relies on closely following the principles and procedures outlined in the **Guidelines for Geographic Names 2010**. Please ensure that you refer to this document when naming geographical features, localities and roads. It is located at www.dse.vic.gov.au.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Geographic Naming Policy has been developed to provide a consistent approach to geographic naming requests and ensures that all Wyndham features, localities and roads are appropriately named whilst preserving existing historical names. It identifies the key factors to be considered by Council when deliberating on geographic naming requests, either to assign new names or alter existing names.

This policy will be implemented in conjunction with the 'Naming Rights and Advertising Signage on Council's Sporting Grounds Policy'.

2. BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*, Council is a Naming Authority, and as such, is required to name all public geographic features, localities and public roads in the municipal district.

In the consideration of geographic naming requests, Council is required to abide by the Guidelines for Geographic Naming 2010 ('the Guidelines') and register all geographic names in the Register of Geographic Names, VICNAMES. The Department of Sustainability and Environment has informally advised that at this time it is expected that municipalities register or record new or renamed features, localities and roads. Council is required to assist private owners with the naming and recording of private features and roads.

The Guidelines have detailed instructions and directions that Council is required to follow to name:

- features (including mountains, watercourses, buildings, prominent structures, parks and reserves)
- localities (where there are officially recognised and registered boundaries; including suburbs, towns, cities and regions)
- roads (including alleyways, bridges, streets, highways, fire tracks, bike paths and walking tracks).

It is important that these Guidelines are utilised to ensure that any names proposed are approved. In addition these guidelines provide guidance on the use of dual names, base names, naming features and roads which cross municipal boundaries and naming private features and roads.

Experience in determining geographic names has demonstrated the community's desire to retain historical place names. Council's Corporate Plan seeks the preservation of our environment, identity and heritage. This has implications for the names chosen for features, localities and roads.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

When making decisions about naming features, location and roads Council will:

- Comply with the principles set out in the Guidelines. Especially the principles outlined at 1.8 (pp. 12–20)
 - 1(A) Language;
 - 1(B) Recognising public interest;
 - 1(C) Ensuring public safety;
 - 1(D) Ensuring names are not duplicated;
 - 1(E) Directional names to be avoided;
 - 1(F) Assigning extent to a feature, locality or road;
 - 1(G) Linking the name to the place;
 - 1(H) Using commemorative names;
 - 1(I) Using commercial and business names;
 - 1(J) Names must not be discriminatory;
 - 1(K) Recognition and use of Indigenous Australian names;
 - 1(L) Dual names;
 - 1(M) Consulting with the public;
 - 1(N) Lodging, considering and addressing objections;
 - 1(O) Notification of a naming decision; and
 - 1(P) Signage.

There are additional principles for features (pp. 24–25)

- 2(A) Feature type;
- 2(B) Waterways;
- 2(C) Locational names; and
- 2(D) Base names.

localities (pp. 40–43)

- 3(A) Boundary location;
- 3(B) Estate and subdivision names;
- 3(C) Size;
- 3(D) Hyphens; and
- 3(E) Local government area boundary review.

and roads (pp. 60–63)

- 4(A) AS/NZS 4819 Geographic Information – Rural and Urban Addressing;
- 4(B) Extent: road course, start and end points;
- 4(C) Addresses and numbering;
- 4(D) Road types;
- 4(E) Unacceptable road names;
- 4(F) Obstructed or altered roads; and
- 4(G) Signage.

- Preserve the heritage and identity of Wyndham’s localities.
- Retain and register existing names rather than renaming.

- Link the name to place through the use of the following ‘naming themes’:
 - location (including locality and road names);
 - Indigenous heritage and language;
 - prior uses of the land and the people associated with it;
 - local flora and fauna;
 - significant contributors to the community who are deceased including women;
 - social and historical events;
 - historical exploration and settlement; and
 - recognition of cultural diversity in Wyndham.
- Acknowledge and include in the naming process:
 - Traditional Owners and Indigenous groups;
 - local historical societies;
 - multi-cultural groups or communities; and
 - women’s and youth groups.
- Only use names outside of the above naming themes upon discretion and where it is necessary to do so.

4. POLICY INITIATIVES/ACTIONS

4.1. POLICY SCOPE

This policy relates to all publicly owned features, localities and public roads located in Wyndham for which Council is determined to be a Naming Authority as detailed in the Guidelines. Victorian Government authorities such as VicRoads, Parks Victoria and the Department of Education are determined to be the Naming Authority for public features or roads that they own or maintain.

It should be noted that all privately owned geographic features and roads need to be named and recorded in VICNAMES. These names should also comply with the principles outlined in the Guidelines.

Council is expected to register or record new or renamed features, localities and roads. It is not expected that Council register or record existing names even where they are not listed on VICNAMES. Any reasons or history provided for names chosen can be submitted to the Office of Geographic Names for entry into VICNAMES as historical data.

Council will only consider requests that are made in writing or through the Notification and Editing Service (NES).

4.2. FEATURE NAMES

In general, features shall be named in the following manner:

- describing the feature and its locality; or (if this creates a duplicate)
- describing the feature and its abutting road name; or (if this creates a duplicate)
- using a name already identified by Council for use as a feature name; or
- consultation with the respective committee of management, sporting or community club and the general public.

Council should give preference to naming its prominent local features according to the themes outlined in this policy. Important public features should only be named by describing the feature and its locality as an interim measure. From time-to-time Council may wish to consult with local interest groups to develop an appropriate list of names to use for new geographic features.

The 'Naming Rights & Advertising on Council's Sporting Grounds Policy' only applies to requests for naming rights in sponsorship agreements between local clubs and commercial or industrial enterprises.

4.3. LOCALITY NAMES

Wyndham's locality names are formally assigned and registered with Land Victoria. They are named according to an historical link to the respective area.

To preserve the heritage and identity of Wyndham's localities, alterations to existing names shall not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that there is total community support for a locality name change and the name change is needed under extraordinary circumstances. Alteration to a locality name shall be a rarity. Council will not consider new locality or boundary changes for reasons of improving real estate valuations. Excision of an area of land within a locality for reassignment of a new locality name shall also not be permitted.

Should an area within a locality need to be named for identity and emergency services purposes, it is to be assigned as a locality name, subject to the following criteria being met:

- The area to be named has become an identified destination of state or national tourism significance.
- Major development in a suburb has severely changed the characteristic of the suburb to the extent that there is confusion in identifying the locality by emergency services and the general public.
- The merits of the naming proposal warrant the assignment of a locality name.

4.4. ROAD NAMES

Council will work collaboratively with developers to create compliant road names for new subdivisions. However, it is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that the features and roads in a subdivision are named according to the principles set out in the Guidelines. Approval for new road names on plans of subdivision will be administered by the Town Planning Department to ensure that proposed names comply. Themes used by developers to name roads in subdivisions can be outside the themes outlined in this policy, however Council can suggest these themes for the developer to consider. The Town Planning Department maintains a database of all road names for reference by Council, including those that are proposed or awaiting approval.

The Guidelines provide that private roads and features in subdivisions or on private land need to be assessed against the Guidelines and recorded in VICNAMES. It is the responsibility of the owner to name any private roads and features and to forward the names to the Office of Geographic Names to be recorded but Council may need to assist the owner with this process.

All other road naming or alterations to existing road names shall be referred to the Governance Unit to ensure compliance with this policy and registration of the name with the Registrar of Geographic Names. It should be noted that the definition of a 'road' also includes alleyways, bridges, highways, fire tracks, bike paths and walking tracks.

The Office of Geographic Names have advised that it will routinely and randomly audit plans of subdivision to ensure that road names are compliant with the principles set out in the Guidelines. Names that are found to be noncompliant will require renaming.

5. DELEGATE OF AUTHORITY

The Guidelines includes that naming may be made by delegation. In this case, approval for the name does not need to be granted by Council but may require a consultation process as outlined in the Guidelines.

Under this policy:

1. the naming of localities, important public features, major roads and proposals of renaming are required to be resolved by Council at an Ordinary Council Meeting.
2. the Manager, Town Planning is a delegate of authority to approve new names on plans of subdivision on behalf of Council.
3. the Director, Corporate Services is a delegate of authority to approve all other new geographic names on behalf of Council. These naming proposals may be referred to Council as necessary.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Wyndham Geographic Naming Procedure
- *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*
- Guidelines for Geographic Names 2010
- *Local Government Act 1989* (Section 206 and Schedule 10)
- Naming Rights & Advertising on Council's Sporting Grounds Policy (2009)
- Wyndham Planning Scheme
- *Planning & Environment Act 1987*