

Naming Policy

2023

Responsible Directorate: Chief Executive Office

Authorised By: Council

Date of Adoption: 27 February 2023

Review Date: 26 February 2028

Policy Type: Council

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Purpose	3
1.2 Scope	3
1.3 Corporate framework	3
2. Background.....	4
2.1 Policy environment.....	4
2.1.1 The Act and the Naming Rules.....	4
2.1.2 Registration of place names.....	5
2.1.3 Council as naming authority	5
2.1.4 Assets subject to the Naming Rules.....	6
2.1.5 Assets not subject to the Naming Rules	6
3. Methodology	6
3.1 Consultation	6
4. Policy statement.....	7
4.1 Naming Principles.....	8
4.2 Selection of Names.....	10
4.3 Naming proposal process.....	11
5. Implementation and monitoring	11
5.1 Evaluation	11
5.2 Accountabilities	11
6. Related documents	11
7. Definitions.....	12

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Naming Policy (the **Policy**) is to establish Council processes for the naming of Council managed assets including roads, features and localities.

1.2 Scope

The Policy applies to all proposals to name Council managed assets including roads, features or localities for which Council is the naming authority, whether originating internally or externally.

Guidance is provided in this Policy for naming Council managed assets including roads, features or localities, which are subject to the *Naming rules for places in Victoria, Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2022* (the **Naming Rules**) and those Council managed assets that are not subject to the Naming Rules.

The Victorian Registrar of Geographic Names (the **Registrar**) assisted by Geographic Names Victoria (**GNV**) administers the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (the **Act**) and is responsible for reviewing the naming and registration of all roads, features and localities in Victoria to ensure compliance with the Naming Rules. The Naming Rules uphold the guidelines in the Act and are reviewed by the Registrar at least once every 5 years.

Council as the relevant naming authority is responsible for developing a naming proposal and submitting it to GNV for approval and registration for places covered by the legislation.

Any existing name cannot be taken as a precedent for future approvals. Any naming proposal, including changes to existing names, will need to comply with this Policy and where applicable, the Naming Rules.

Existing names do not need to be revisited to ensure that they comply with this Policy or the Naming Rules.

The Policy applies to the naming of Council managed assets including roads, features and localities, including but not limited to the list of features found on the [Land Victoria website](#) and rooms within a Council building. The naming may be in consultation with any current tenant and/or licensee of the asset.

1.3 Corporate framework

This Policy is consistent with the Boroondara Community Plan 2021-31.

It supports *Strategic Objective 7 of the BCP* to 'Ensure decisions are financially and socially responsible through transparent and ethical processes' and the following strategies under Theme 7 - Leadership and Governance:

- **Strategy 7.1** - Decision-making is transparent and accountable through open governance processes with timely communication and reporting.
- **Strategy 7.8** - Celebrate and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, knowledges and heritage through implementing initiatives in partnerships with our community and stakeholders.

This Policy also supports the following action in the Boroondara Reconciliation Strategy 2022-26:

- **Action 6:** Develop an internal naming policy and procedure with advice and feedback from Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and in alignment with state-wide statutory requirements for Naming Rules in Victoria, to guide Council consideration on the inclusion of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung language and/or acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and peoples in the naming of places and spaces across the municipality and in Council facilities.

2. Background

2.1 Policy environment

The Policy has been developed in line with the Naming Rules.

The Policy provides an overview of Council's responsibilities as a naming authority and the methods by which Council names Council managed assets including roads, features and localities.

2.1.1 The Act and the Naming Rules

The primary aim of the Act is to make provision for the naming of 'places' and the registration of place names.

The Act defines place as 'any place or building that is, or is likely to be, of public or historical interest and includes, but is not restricted to:

- township, area, park, garden, reserve of land, suburb and locality
- topographical feature, including undersea feature
- street, road, transport station, government school, government hospital and government nursing home'.

Section 5 of the Act provides for the making of guidelines relating to procedures to be implemented in selecting, assigning or amending names of places. In accordance with the requirements of section 5(2) of the Act, the guidelines:

- set out the rules and process to be followed in selecting, assigning, or amending a name of a place
- set out the process to be followed before selecting or assigning an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander name of a place
- specify criteria for the assessment of cultural heritage or other significance in relation to the naming of places
- set out requirements for consultation before a name of a place is selected, assigned, or amended

- specify other matters relating to the naming of places.

The Naming Rules are the guidelines made under section 5 of the Act.

The Naming Rules were reviewed by the Victorian Government in 2020-21. A key focus of the review was to encourage greater gender equality and diversity including more places and streets named after women or Aboriginal people or in an Aboriginal language, and names that reflect Victoria's diverse, multicultural population.

Following the review, the amended Naming Rules were released on 24 February 2022. The recommendations from the review inform the naming of new places and spaces.

The Naming Rules provide a structure for ensuring that assigning names to roads, features and localities in Victoria is undertaken in a consistent way for the community's benefit. Naming of any place in accordance with the Naming Rules enables it to be clearly identified, which means its precise location can be determined.

The uniqueness and accuracy of a place name reduces the likelihood of delaying an emergency services vehicle due to inadequate or confusing location details, which might have life threatening consequences. Proper naming also assists with service delivery by other agencies and companies.

2.1.2 Registration of place names

The Registrar assisted by GNV is responsible for administering the Act, ensuring compliance with the Naming Rules and maintaining the Victorian Register of Geographic Names (**VICNAMES**), which officially records the names of all roads, features and localities in Victoria.

The Registrar has the discretion to determine whether a name should be Gazetted and registered in VICNAMES and will only enter names that are compliant with the Naming Rules.

2.1.3 Council as naming authority

Council is the 'naming authority' responsible for naming Council managed assets including roads, features and localities within the municipal district.

When naming a road, feature or locality, which is subject to the Naming Rules, Council is responsible for ensuring the naming proposal complies with the Naming Rules and for submitting the proposal to the Registrar for approval and registration.

In instances where a place has greater than local significance, Council can request that the Registrar convenes a Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee to develop or determine a decision on a naming proposal.

2.1.4 Assets subject to the Naming Rules

All roads and localities will be named in accordance with the Naming Rules and this Policy.

The Naming Rules and this Policy will also apply to the naming of 'features' that are of public or historical interest, or which Council considers to be of public safety or navigational significance (e.g. prominent landmarks which the community or emergency services may use to navigate the area).

A feature is considered to be a unique geographical place or attribute easily distinguished within the landscape. For example, a feature can be a mountain, watercourse, building, prominent structure or park. A list of features accepted for registration and included in VICNAMES can be found on the [Land.Vic website](#).

2.1.5 Assets not subject to the Naming Rules

Council is not required to comply with the Naming Rules when naming ordinary Council assets that are not of public or historical interest and which are of no public safety or navigational significance, such as small rotundas, meeting rooms in Council buildings, scoreboards and small playgrounds. If Council decides to name these assets, it will name them in accordance with this Policy and whatever criteria that Council sees fit. In relation to such assets, the Naming Rules will be used as a guide only.

Other legislation is also relevant to geographic naming including but not limited to the *Local Government Act 2020*, which regulates renaming of a council, ward or municipality with specific legislative requirements and processes that must be followed. These processes are not outlined in this Policy and are not subject to the Act or the Naming Rules.

3. Methodology

The process for developing naming proposals is based on the principles and processes outlined in the Naming Rules and this Policy.

3.1 Consultation

Consultation is a key element of the naming process and Council recognises the importance of community feedback and buy-in when naming Council managed assets including roads, localities and features, which are of particular importance or interest to the local community.

For naming proposals subject to the Naming Rules, consultation will be undertaken with all relevant stakeholders in line with the requirements set out in the Naming Rules. The level and form of consultation will depend on the nature of the naming proposal.

Council will ensure any proposed names are compliant with the Naming Rules before they are put out for consultation. The consultation period must be for a minimum of

30 days. If a person does not make a submission during the consultation period, the person will be deemed to have consented to the proposal.

The owners and occupiers of properties who will be directly affected by a naming proposal must be contacted by letter or email.

Council may consult with the extended community (beyond those directly affected by the proposal) in relation to naming proposals of broader community interest.

The relevant ward Councillor or Councillors will also be briefed as required.

For naming proposals using Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung language, the Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (**WWCHAC**), will be consulted in line with the requirements set out in the Naming Rules.

If Council is unsure of the suitability of a naming proposal, Council may contact GNV for guidance.

4. Policy statement

Through this Policy, Council seeks to provide a consistent and efficient process for the naming of all Council managed assets including roads, features and localities and a high-quality customer service to all those affected. Council will work towards this outcome by providing the community with clear direction about the circumstances in which Council managed assets including roads, features and localities will be named.

Council recognises that the Policy adopted for naming Council managed assets including roads, features and localities includes all statutory requirements.

The display of all signage must comply with the Boroondara Planning Scheme and, where applicable, the Naming Rules. Naming should not inappropriately impact the environment of Boroondara through unnecessary signage.

When naming Council managed assets including roads, features and localities that are subject to the Naming Rules, Council will do all things necessary to ensure that naming proposals comply with the Naming Rules. If Council is not obliged to comply with the Naming Rules for a particular naming proposal Council will nonetheless strive to act in a manner consistent with the spirit of the principles in the Naming Rules.

Council recognises the importance of names for providing locational references for community members, emergency services and other agencies and companies to navigate to a location and orient themselves. When selecting names, Council will endeavour to create a 'sense of place' and strive to honour and observe the local character of the area. Council will also aim to honour cultural heritage and historical connections of the relevant precinct and select names consistent with any identifiable historic naming trends or themes in the local precinct. Where appropriate, Council will

support naming in Traditional Owner language, consider gender equality and recognise the diversity of our multicultural population to ensure we are inclusive of all communities.

New road names proposed as part of a subdivision plan are considered as part of the plan of subdivision certification process and will need to comply with this Policy and with the Naming Rules.

4.1 Naming Principles

The naming principles are set out in section 2 of the Naming Rules. They are designed to ensure the naming process produces consistent outcomes and that place names are enduring and there is no ambiguity, confusion, error or discrimination caused by the naming or locality boundary change process.

The naming principles are described in detail in the Naming Rules, and a snapshot of each principle is set out below:

Principle A - Ensuring public safety

Geographic names must not create risk for emergency and other essential services.

Principle B - Recognising the public interest

Naming proposals will only be progressed if the long-term benefits to the community can be shown to outweigh any private or corporate interests, or short-term effects.

Principle C - Linking the name to a place

Names should have a link to place to ensure the preservation of our cultural heritage.

Names that link the name to the place could relate to Traditional Owner culture and occupation of the land (Refer to Principle E). Other examples include local flora and fauna, Australian war contributions, past exploration and settlement, local geography and geology, significant events, the cultural diversity of past and current inhabitants, or patterns of land usage, people of significance in creating the history of a place and its community and industrial/mineral/agricultural production.

Principle D - Ensuring names are not duplicated

Names should not be duplicated within a locality or within a 5-kilometre radius.

Principle E - Recognition and use of Traditional Owner languages

The use of Traditional Owner languages in place naming is encouraged, subject to agreement from the relevant Traditional Owner group(s).

Principle F - Names must not discriminate or be offensive

Place names must not discriminate or cause offense having regard to all relevant factors, including the extent and distribution of usage, historical context, user perceptions and intent, and lexical meanings.

Principle G - Gender equality

Gender equality in the naming of assets, roads, features and localities is encouraged. When developing a naming proposal consideration should be given to gender equality.

Principle H - Dual names

Dual names, comprised of Traditional Owner and non-Traditional Owner place names, are encouraged as a transitional step toward the adoption of the Traditional Owner name. Dual names should be considered when naming geographical features which have an existing non-Traditional Owner name and for which a Traditional Owner name could also apply.

Principle I - Using commemorative names

Using a name that commemorates an event, person, or place can establish a link to place and preserve cultural heritage in a local area. Examples include recognising individuals who have played a significant role in the life of the local community, Traditional Owners, cultural events or following a theme such as Australian war contributions. The names of people who are still alive must be avoided because community attitudes and opinions can change over time.

Principle J - Using commercial and business names

Places should not be named after commercial businesses, trade names and non-profit organisations.

Principle K - Language

Careful consideration must be given to naming proposals to ensure that they comply with the punctuation and grammatical requirements in the Naming Rules and that they can be readily understood i.e. names are easy to pronounce, spell and write (exception is made for Traditional Owner names, where it is accepted that Traditional Owner names that initially appear complex will, over time, become familiar and easy to use). Names taken from a language other than English may be acceptable and represent Victoria's diverse multicultural society but must be written in Australian English.

Principle L - Directional names to be avoided

Cardinal directions (e.g. north, south, east and west) must be avoided, and a proposed name that uses a cardinal direction to distinguish itself from another similar name will be deemed to be a duplicate name and therefore unacceptable.

Principle M - Assigning extent to a road, feature or locality

When developing a naming proposal, the area and/or extent to which the name will apply must be clearly defined.

While there is not a separate principle relating to cultural diversity, recognition of the need to reflect the diversity of our population to ensure we are inclusive of all communities regardless of race or gender is referenced in the preface to the Naming Rules, as well as within principles C, I and K.

Council will assess all naming proposals for Council managed assets subject to the Naming Rules to ensure compliance with the naming principles.

Council recognises that all naming principles are equally important and will give due consideration to each relevant principle as part of the naming process. Whether a principle applies to a naming proposal will depend on the nature of the naming proposal and will be identified following background research undertaken to inform the selection of names as outlined below. In particular, the following naming principles

may be relevant to some naming proposals:

- Principle C - Linking the name to a place
- Principle E - Recognition and use of Traditional Owner languages
- Principle G - Gender equality
- Principle H - Dual names
- Principle I - Using commemorative names
- Principle K - Language

4.2 Selection of Names

When identifying appropriate names, in addition to the naming principles, Council will have regard to the following considerations:

- To identify suitable names for a place, Council will undertake background research, including consulting with the Local and Family History Library team and the local historical groups to identify any appropriate historical connections or historical naming trends in the relevant precinct. This background research will help identify which of the naming principles are relevant and in particular, if one or more of the principles C, E, G, H, I and K are relevant for a naming proposal.
- Consideration shall be given to names that have a historical or other relevant connection to the place or the immediate area in which it is situated.
- Where there is a common naming theme in an area, this theme shall be applied to naming proposals in that area whenever possible.
- Assets located within a geographical feature, e.g. a pavilion, small playground, scoreboard or oval in a park or reserve, are generally not features subject to the Naming Rules and will usually be named by Council for the geographical feature in which they are located.
- Council will not name a place after a living person or a commercial entity/business, except in exceptional circumstances and with the Registrar's approval.
- Where appropriate, Council will also consider the use of locational names (e.g. names that include reference to the locality) as this can be important for orientation.
- Council will consider inclusivity, gender equality, cultural diversity and Traditional Owner language.
- Council will not process naming proposals that include Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung language without obtaining advice and approval from WWCHAC.
- Where the background research identifies more than one potential name, Council will consider consulting on more than one name. This may include an Aboriginal name with a non-Aboriginal name.
- A naming application will only be progressed if long-term benefits to the community can be shown and that it will not put public safety (such as emergency services) at risk or cause confusion for public services (such as transport, communication and mail services).
- Names should be enduring.

Suitable names that have been identified but not used for the purpose of a naming proposal will be kept in Council's database for future use.

4.3 Naming proposal process

Anyone may submit a place naming request to Council. Council will consider such requests and determine whether to proceed. All applicants are encouraged to contact Council prior to submitting a proposal to discuss the merits and relevant naming principles that need to be applied.

If Council receives a naming request, Council will respond or request further information within 30 days.

Final documentation of a naming proposal should include the following:

- Name determined for the asset including road, feature or locality
- Locality Plan and Site Plan - Details of site (geographic location), ownership
- Background to the naming of the asset with a brief history
- When relevant, report on survey results including relevant commentary from stakeholders.

5. Implementation and monitoring

5.1 Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed in five years.

5.2 Accountabilities

For all queries or feedback regarding this Policy, please use the contact details for the responsible department below.

Position Title	Contact number	Contact department email
Coordinator Revenue and Property Services	92748 4325	revenue@boroondara.vic.gov.au

6. Related documents

- Geographic Place Names Act 1998
- Naming rules for places in Victoria, Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities - 2022
- Boroondara Reconciliation Strategy 2022-26
- Local Government Act 2020
- Road Management Act 2004
- Boroondara Planning Scheme
- Gender Equality Act 2020
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

7 Definitions

Assets	<p>For the purposes of this policy, Council managed assets include roads, features and localities that are subject to the Naming Rules. Council managed assets also refer to other assets managed by Council such as small rotundas, meeting rooms in Council buildings, scoreboards and small playgrounds.</p> <p>It does not include internal or external features of Council assets including trees, artwork, rocks, plaques, memorials, furniture, playground equipment and platforms.</p>
Council	<p>Indicates reference to the City of Boroondara as a geographical area and also refers to the entity which has the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Boroondara community.</p>
Feature	<p>A feature is considered to be a unique geographical place or attribute that is easily distinguished within the landscape. For example, a feature can be a mountain, watercourse, building, prominent structure or park. For an up-to-date list of features and their definitions visit the Land Victoria website at https://www.land.vic.gov.au/place-naming/understand-the-naming-process/the-naming-rules.</p> <p>Examples of features where the Municipal Council is the naming authority include but are not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• community centre• market• shopping centre• sportsground.
Locality	<p>A geographical area that has identifiable community and/or landscape characteristics. In urban areas, a locality is commonly referred to as a 'suburb'.</p>
Naming Authorities	<p>Responsible for submitting naming proposals that comply with the Naming Rules to the Registrar. Due to the variety of roads, features or localities that can be named, there are multiple types of naming authorities. In most cases, councils, government departments or other authorities and private organisations are the naming authorities when they are responsible for a particular road or feature. This may apply even when they are not the owners and/or responsible for the maintenance of the road or feature, for example, Crown land committees of management or leased/licensed facilities with maintenance obligations.</p>
Naming Rules	<p>Means the <i>Naming rules for places in Victoria, Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities</i> released by Geographic Names Victoria in line with the <i>Geographic Place Names Act 1998</i>, as amended from time to time.</p>

Traditional Owner	<p>While there is a diverse range of Traditional Owner organisations in Victoria – Traditional Owner networks, health organisations, arts organisations and local advisory groups – naming proposals should be directed to the relevant Traditional Owner group(s).</p> <p>The <i>Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> recognises Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAP) as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage. RAPs are the primary source of advice and knowledge on matters relating to Aboriginal places or Aboriginal objects in their region.</p> <p>In Boroondara, Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation is the recognised RAP.</p> <p>The traditional language of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people is Woi-wurrung.</p>
VICNAMES	<p>The Register of Geographic gazetted names. Names that are gazetted are recorded in VICNAMES.</p>