

PLACE AND FEATURE NAMING POLICY

Policy Number:	4.2.2
Approved by:	Council
Date Approved:	December 2025
Date of Next Review:	December 2026
Applicable to:	Assets and Projects Business Unit Built Environment Business Unit
Responsible Officer:	Manager Assets and Projects
Related Policies:	Roadside Memorials Policy Public Memorials in Open Spaces Policy
Related Documents:	<i>Naming Rules for Places in Victoria</i> <i>Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities - 2022</i> AS/NZS 4819:2011 Rural and urban addressing
Statutory Reference:	<i>Local Government Act 1989</i> <i>Geographic Place Names Act 1998</i>

OVERVIEW

Wellington Shire Council is the naming authority for roads and features that it controls and/or maintains within its municipality. It does this in accordance with the *Geographic Place Names Act* which is administered by Geographic Names Victoria who oversee the formal process of naming/renaming roads and features.

This policy sets out the approach taken when dealing with requests to name roads, localities and other features and managing requests for memorials.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- (a) Provide Council with a consistent and standardised approach for the naming of localities, roads and other features that are controlled or managed by Wellington Shire Council, or where Wellington Shire Council has been asked to become involved in naming a feature.
- (b) Ensure that naming is consistent with community expectations, Council strategies and policies, relevant legislation and the *Naming rules for places in Victoria*, where applicable.
- (c) Provide a framework for managing requests for plaques, roadside memorials and memorials that are to be located within Wellington Shire public open spaces whilst protecting the safety of road users and those who place and visit the roadside memorials and to protect the intended purpose, environmental values and aesthetic appearance of Council's public open spaces.

DEFINITIONS

(a) Road

A road is considered to be any public or private land-based thoroughfare or course navigable by vehicle or foot. It can be used for assigning addresses or allowing access between points or to a feature. Examples of roads include streets, lanes, fire tracks, bike paths and walking tracks.

(b) Locality

A geographical area that has identifiable community and/or landscape characteristics.

(c) Feature

A unique geographical place or attribute that is easily distinguished within the landscape. May be natural or man-made. For example, a feature can be a mountain, watercourse, building, prominent structure or park.

(i) Reserves and Parks

Open space, entire reserves or parks (including recreation reserves) dedicated primarily for the use of active or passive recreation

(ii) Buildings

Entire buildings dedicated primarily as community and/or multi-use facilities or for sporting and recreational activities e.g. neighbourhood houses, community centres, scout and guide halls, senior citizens centres, stadiums, sports pavilions, etc.

(iii) Parts of Buildings

Parts of buildings e.g. a social room in a sports pavilion, a meeting room in a community centre

(iv) Sporting Complexes/Venues, Sportsgrounds and Active Playing Surfaces

Entire sporting complexes/venues, outdoor sportsgrounds and ovals dedicated for sport and active recreation e.g. ovals and pitches, athletics venue, velodrome, tennis complex, bowling greens etc.

(v) Sporting Infrastructure

Sporting infrastructure relates to the structures and infrastructure required to support the delivery of organised sport in active spaces such as scoreboards, spectator shelters, cricket practice wickets, coaches' boxes, player dug outs, goal posts, sports fencing etc.

(d) Public Open Space

All Council owned or managed land that is open or accessible to people. This includes:

- Council owned public open space including reserves and sports fields
- Land managed by Council but owned by another body
- Activity centre locations, including footpaths, median strips, public squares, malls and laneways
- Road reservations
- Council infrastructure within Public Space, such as:
 - the exterior or interior of Council buildings;
 - reserve furniture (such as reserve benches, picnic tables etc.);
 - any other infrastructure (such as picnic shelters, barbeques, playgrounds etc.).

(e) Memorial

An object or a landscaped feature (such as a tree or garden) in a Public Open Space designed to preserve the memory of a person, group or event.

(f) Plaque

Flat tablet of metal, stone or other material which may include text and/or images that commemorate a person, event or historical information relevant to a particular location. The tablet may be fixed to an object or building located within Public Space.

SCOPE OF POLICY

The policy **applies to**:

- (a) Localities (entirely or partially) located within the Wellington Shire local government area.
- (b) Public Spaces, including roads and other features, that are owned or maintained by Wellington Shire Council.
- (c) Private roads and features for which Wellington Shire Council has been asked to become involved.
- (d) Roadside memorials and memorials in public open spaces.

The policy **does not apply to**:

- (a) Roads managed by State Government authorities such as Regional Roads Victoria (VicRoads), Parks Victoria and Department of Environment Land Water and Planning which are excluded from this policy.
- (b) Features that are not located in Public Spaces owned or managed by Wellington Shire Council, including places of regional, state or national significance (unless Wellington Shire Council is consulted for input).

LEGISLATION

The *Local Government Act 1989* Schedule 10, Clause 5 states:

1. A Council may:

- a) approve, assign or change the name of a road; and
- b) erect signs on a road; and
- c) approve, assign and change the number of a road and any premises next to a road; and
- d) require people to number their premises and to renew those numbers.

The Council, in exercising a power under paragraph (a) of sub-clause (1) must act in accordance with the guidelines under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* and must advise the Registrar under that Act of the action it has taken.

Council is required to abide by the *Naming rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022* which is the statutory guideline provided for under section 5 of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

All requests for new names or name changes must be made in writing to the Wellington Shire Council Place Names Committee. Names should be linked to the place, either based on unofficial names used by the local community, if named after a person, then someone held in strong regard by the community or relating to Aboriginal culture or occupation of the land, local flora or fauna, Australian war contributions or European exploration and settlement, local geography and geology etc.

All recommendations made by the Place Names Committee will be presented to Council for approval.

Formal naming requests

Formal naming requests will be assessed against the naming principles under the *Naming rules for places in Victoria* and submitted to Geographic Names Victoria for approval and gazettal. Formal names are registered for inclusion on the Register of Geographic Names (VICNAMES), the State's authoritative place names register.

Only places of significant prominence and permanence will be formally named:

- (a) Roads
- (b) Localities
- (c) Natural features
- (d) Entire Reserves or Parks, including Recreation Reserves
- (e) Entire Buildings
- (f) Sporting Complexes or Venues
- (g) Sporting Complexes/Venues, Sportsgrounds and Active Playing Surfaces.

Minor features within a park or reserve will not be formally named and registered e.g. playgrounds, sporting infrastructure within a park or reserve are usually identifiable by the name of the park/reserve.

The names of existing places will only be changed in exceptional circumstances, for example, where public safety is an issue, where duplicate names cause confusion in locating a place, illogical or non-standard street addressing etc.

Formal naming proposals approved by Council will be subject to the public consultation process outlined in the *Naming rules for places in Victoria*. Community views are encouraged, particularly those of the local historical societies, Traditional Owners, RSLs and other community groups.

Council Approved Names Register

Council has adopted a *Council Approved Names Register* which is available on Council's website. The *Council Approved Names Register* lists names that have been approved by Council for future use either within a particular locality or anywhere in the Shire, subject to duplicate name criteria set out in the *Naming rules for places in Victoria*.

Roads in new subdivisions

Developers are welcome to submit road names to the Wellington Shire Council Place Names Committee for consideration. Developers are encouraged to name roads within a subdivision according to a theme.

A developer may also select road names from the *Council Approved Names Register* for their subdivision for the purposes of certification, without having to seek approval from the Place Names Committee and Council, provided that the selected road name is to be used within the locality specified in the Register. When a road name is selected the developer must notify the Place Names Committee prior to certification to enable the name to be reserved.

Locality-centric names should be given priority over names applicable to the broader Wellington Shire. When a road name selected from the Register is either applicable to the whole of Wellington Shire or intended to be used outside of the locality specified, the selected name is to be referred to the Place Names Committee and then presented to Council for consideration.

A commercial subdivision or development does not in itself entitle the developer to naming rights unless land is donated for community benefit and not just a requirement of the subdivision. Other criteria under the *Naming rules for places in Victoria* must also be met.

Private Roads

Private roads must be named within complex sites comprising of multiple internal roads e.g. airports, caravan parks and retirement villages etc.

In all other circumstances, naming of private roads (including common property) will only be considered if there is a public safety issue and/or to facilitate delivery of goods and services.

Informal naming requests

Informal naming recognises individuals or groups who have shown a significant commitment to the Wellington Shire community in any field of endeavour e.g. education, arts, culture, recreation, community development, community service, community leadership.

Informal naming proposals will be endorsed by Council and not submitted to Geographic Names Victoria for approval and gazettal. Informal names are not registered for inclusion on the Register of Geographic Names (VICNAMES).

Minor features and structures on Council owned or managed land may be informally named:

- (a) Features within a park or reserve e.g. playground within a park
- (b) Parts of Buildings e.g. internal rooms, social room in a sports pavilion, meeting room in an office
- (c) Individual playing surfaces e.g. single basketball court, single tennis court, a bowling green
- (d) Sporting Infrastructure e.g. scoreboards, spectator shelters, cricket practice wickets, coaches' boxes, player dug outs, goal posts, sports fencing etc.

Informal naming of minor features and structures will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Place Names Committee in consultation with the asset owner. Informal naming proposals endorsed by the Place Names Committee and asset owner will be presented to Council for approval. Costs associated with signage will be the responsibility of the applicant.

Informal naming proposals will not be subject to wider public consultation.

An informal naming request will be assessed against the following criteria:

- (a) The nominee is/was of good repute and not likely to be the subject of controversy;
- (b) The nominee has/had made an outstanding contribution to the field of endeavour relevant to the place being named; *or* the nominee has/had been a volunteer at a Wellington Shire club, organisation or community group contributing over 25 years;
- (c) The nominee has/had been resident of Wellington Shire or surrounding district and is/was widely known and respected within the local community; *or* had a recognised historical link with the locality and is generally acknowledged as having made a significant contribution to the community;
- (d) The nominee has/had made a significant contribution, over and above other potentially suitable candidates;
- (e) The nominee has/had been nominated unanimously by the committee of the relevant sporting/cultural/community group which is the major user (historically and currently) of the facility;

- (f) The naming request has the support of all other tenant clubs and regular user groups of the feature to be named;
- (g) If the nominee is deceased, the naming request application should include the written consent of their immediate family and is not to be made within two years of the person passing;
- (h) The name is not considered offensive or likely to give offence.

Naming requests for members of Council staff, Councillors, appointees to Committees of the Council, a person still holding public office or those formally associated with the Council, will not be considered as long as that formal relationship continues to exist.

Names of political parties or entities will not be considered.

Plaques and Memorials

Council recognises that plaques and memorials provide recognition and are important in celebrating significant historical events and persons or organisations closely associated with the leadership, cultural and social development of the Shire.

Persons and community groups seeking to install a plaque or memorial on a roadside or in a public open space should refer to either the Roadside Memorials Policy or the Public Memorials in Public Open Space Policy as appropriate for guidance on the applicable criteria prior to submitting an application in writing.

General principles

Permanent plaques and memorials will not generally be approved until an individual has been deceased for at least two years to allow for appropriate development of historical perspective and in the case of a roadside memorial must not impact the safety of road users or those who may visit the site. The plaque or memorial to be sited in a public open space or reserve must also be consistent with Council's strategic and urban design vision for the proposed site and the land's public purpose and must not negatively impact the aesthetic or environmental value of the site or the use of the space by the community and require little ongoing maintenance and be resistant to vandalism. Plaques attached to an asset like a seat, building, etc. must be durable and must have a life equivalent to the asset to which they are attached.

All costs associated with the plaque or memorials are to be paid by the requestor and if approved will become the property of Wellington Shire Council. Generally, a plaque or memorial will be retained in place for as long as practicable but may be removed if the area where the item is sited is redeveloped or ongoing maintenance costs are prohibitive or if the asset to which the item is attached has reached the end of its useful life.

Approval procedure

1. Requests for new plaques and memorials in Public Spaces must be in writing, addressed to the Place Names Committee. Applications should include all relevant details including proposed text or images as well as the preferred location for the plaque or memorial and demonstrate compliance with the relevant policy.
2. The request will be referred to the relevant Asset Manager for review of the design and layout, wording and location of any proposed plaque or memorial.
3. A Council resolution will be required to approve the installation of a plaque or memorial in a Public Space.
4. If approved, the design, manufacture and installation will be coordinated by Wellington Shire Council and all costs will be borne by the applicant.

GENDER EQUALITY

Wellington Shire Council has a duty to promote gender equality under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*. When developing a naming proposal consideration should be given to gender equality.

REVISION HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
1.0	December 2022	Updated references to Naming Rules latest version (2022). Added sentence on road naming themes in subdivisions. Added Gender Equality statement.
1.1	December 2023	Date of Next Review updated to December 2024. Minor formatting changes. Included related Policy: Public Memorials in Open Spaces Policy. Clarification of Roadside and Public Open Space Memorials to be referred to the Place Names Committee. Clarification of naming of Private Roads.
1.2	December 2024	Date of Next Review updated to December 2025.
1.3	December 2025	Date of Next Review updated to December 2026.