

Geographic Naming Policy



Policy type	Council
Adopted by	Council
Responsible General Manager	Director Corporate, Governance and Performance
Responsible officer	Manager Governance & Performance
Date adopted	22 February 2023
Scheduled for review	This policy will be reviewed four years from the date of adoption, or sooner if required.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure a consistent approach to the naming of roads, features and localities where Moira Shire Council is the Naming Authority and to outline the responsibilities of Council, developers of subdivisions and owners of private roads within the Moira Shire.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all roads, features and localities in which Moira Shire Council is the Naming Authority.

Council's responsibility excludes public roads or features owned or maintained by any State Government authority (such as Parks Victoria, Department of Transport and the Department of Education) and private roads.

Other Government authorities such as Department of Transport, Parks Victoria and the Department of Education are the Naming Authorities for the public roads and features that they own or maintain.

RESPONSIBILITY

Council's Governance & Performance Team is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy and for undertaking the naming process in accordance with the Naming Rules and the delegation of authority.

The Naming Rules allow for naming to occur by delegation of authority, which is set out below:

- The naming of localities, important public features, major roads and renaming proposals will be determined by Council at a Scheduled Council Meeting. Before undertaking the naming process and referring to Council for consideration, proposals will be initially assessed by an internal Road and Place Naming Committee consisting of representatives from a range of Council departments.
- Private roads and new roads made by way of subdivision will be chosen by the owner/developer but must be reviewed for compliance with the Naming Rules in consultation with the Governance & Performance Team.

DEFINITIONS

The Act	<i>Geographic Place Names Act 1998.</i>
Applicant	The party who has submitted a naming proposal to Council.
Council	Moirā Shire Council.

Essential Service	Organisations such as Ambulance Victoria, Australia Post, Country Fire Authority, Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority, State Emergency Service or Victoria Police.
Feature	A unique geographical place or attribute that can be easily distinguished within a landscape, such as mountains, watercourses, buildings, prominent structures, parks and reserves.
Locality	A geographical area that has identifiable community and/or landscape characteristics (also known as a suburb).
Naming Authority	A Municipal Council or other Government department or authority (such as Parks Victoria, Department of Transport).
Naming Rules	The Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities, <i>Naming Rules for places in Victoria 2022</i> (or subsequent rules issued).
Registered Aboriginal Party	Organisations that represent the Traditional Owners and hold responsibilities under the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> for protection, management and preservation of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in a specified geographical area (in the case of Moira Shire this is Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation).
Road	Any public or private land based thoroughfare or course navigable by vehicle or foot, such as alleyways, streets, highways, fire tracks, bike paths and walking tracks.
VICNAMES	The Register of Geographic Names.

POLICY

Council has responsibility as a Naming Authority under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (the Act) for naming of public roads, features and localities in the Moira Shire municipal district and is committed to ensuring that names used comply with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria.

When considering naming of roads, features and localities, Council will ensure naming proposals abide by the principles and follow the processes set out in the Naming Rules and this policy.

Proposing a Name

Anyone in the community can propose a new name for a road, feature or locality for future use or propose renaming an existing name. A Proposal Form which sets out the information required for a naming proposal is available on our website and at our Service Centres.

Because existing road name changes can have significant effects on property owners, occupiers and businesses, changing an existing road name is generally not supported unless there are risks to public safety such as delays with essential services, or if it can be demonstrated to be in the communities' best interest in the long term.

Naming proposals that are supported by the internal Road and Place Naming Committee will be subject to community consultation, approval by Council at a Scheduled Council Meeting and then endorsement by the Register of Geographic Names.

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Proposed names for future use that comply with the Naming Rules will be included in Council's list of potential names which may be provided to developers for new subdivisions or may be used for other roads or features identified for renaming.

Applicants are also encouraged to refer to our Memorials and Plaques Policy if they are wanting to commemorate an individual and consider whether their proposal may be more appropriate for a memorial or plaque at a particular location.

Naming themes

In addition to requiring names to meet the applicable principles set out in Section 2 of the Naming Rules, Council encourages use of the following naming themes for naming of roads and features within the shire:

- Local/native flora and fauna;
- Prior uses of the land;
- Prior landowners/residents of the land;
- Commemorating deceased notable community members;
- Anzac commemorative naming;
- Indigenous heritage and language (subject to approval from Registered Aboriginal Party/ies or traditional owner group/s);
- Social and historical events of the local area;
- Unofficial names.

Equality

Council supports addressing gender equality by recognising more women in commemorative naming across the shire as part of its duty to promote equality under the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

Council will not support names that may cause offence on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion and gender, or to particular community groups.

Road Naming

Change of Existing Road Name

When it is proposed to rename an existing road, the applicant is required to document the reason/s for the proposed change (e.g. causes confusion and/or a risk of delay to an essential service). If the proposal is compliant with the Naming Rules and supported by the internal Road and Place Naming Committee, the renaming proposal will be referred to Council for consideration at a Scheduled Council Meeting.

Council reserves its right to decline any proposal that is not in the communities best interests.

New Subdivisions Road Names

New road names for plans of subdivision are the responsibility of the developer and will be considered as part of the planning process. When selecting proposed names, developers must ensure that the name/s adhere to the principles set out in the Naming Rules and they are encouraged to consider adopting a particular theme if multiple roads to be named.

Prior to request for certification, the proposed names for the roads (and/or common property) must be submitted to Council's Governance and Performance Team for compliance checking against the Naming Rules. This will be a condition of the Planning Permit issued.

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Developers are strongly encouraged to use the Geographic Names Victoria Road Name History form when submitting these road names to Council.

Before submitting the names for compliance checking, it's expected that developers have completed any pre-consultation which may be required as set out below. If this has not occurred prior to submitting the names to Council, it may result in a delay in the compliance checking process:

- In the case of using names connected to indigenous heritage and traditional owner language (Principle E of the Naming Rules), developers are expected to seek written approval from the Registered Aboriginal Party to use the name; or
- In the case of commemorative naming (Principle I of the Naming Rules), developers are expected to have sought written approval prior from family member/s of the person being commemorated.

Please note that although names are checked by Council for compliance, subdivisions may still be subject to a compliance audit by the Registrar of Geographic Names.

Common Property Road Names

The Naming Rules do not require Common Property to be named if the sites themselves can be addressed to the main road, unless there would be benefits such as improved public safety and improved delivery of goods and services.

Council will not consider naming of the common property if there are less than five (5) lots that have direct access from the common property.

Private Roads & Complex Site Road Names

The owners of private roads and internal roads within complex sites (developments such as retirement villages, caravan parks, and gated communities) should name their roads.

If a road on private property does not have a name, the address will be the primary address of the complex/property which can be difficult for emergency and other services.

Owners/developers of complex sites and other private roads are encouraged to name these roads in accordance with the Naming Rules and submit a plan/map showing the proposed road name/s to Council for compliance checking. For new complex sites this may be done as part of the planning process. If the road names are acceptable, Council's Governance and Performance Team will submit the proposed names and site plan/map on behalf of the owner to Geographic Names Victoria for their endorsement.

Feature Naming

Change of Existing Name

As with road renaming proposals, the applicant is required to document the reason/s for the proposed renaming. Feature names must at all times include the type in the name so that the all members of the public can understand what the feature is (e.g. Federation 'Park').

If the proposed renaming is compliant with the Naming Rules and supported by the internal Road and Place Naming Committee, the proposal will be referred to Council for consideration at a Scheduled Council Meeting.

Private Features

Features in private land should also be named and registered in VICNAMES if they are considered to be of public interest. Private features may include hospitals, aged care facilities, tourist attractions, entertainment complexes, shopping centres etc. It is the responsibility of the owner to name any private features, however as with private road naming, the proposal details must be forwarded to Council for compliance checking. If the name/s are acceptable, Council's Governance and Performance Team will submit the proposal on behalf of the owner to Geographic Names Victoria for their endorsement.

Dual naming of Features

If a proposal is received requesting dual naming of a feature, Council will follow the process as set out in Principle H of the Naming Rules.

Locality Naming

To preserve the heritage and identity of Moira Shire's localities, alterations to existing names will not be considered unless it can be demonstrated there is significant community support for a locality name change, and/or the name change is needed under extraordinary circumstances which may include:

- The area to be named has become an identified destination of state, national or tourism significance;
- Major development in a locality has severely changed the characteristic to the extent 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.

Consultation

When Council is planning on proceeding with a naming proposal, consultation will be conducted in accordance with minimum requirements set out in the Naming Rules and Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Prior to undertaking consultation, a report will be presented to Council at a Scheduled Council Meeting requesting authorisation of the consultation process. Consultation will be conducted on all naming proposals that are not new subdivisions, private roads/features or otherwise not required or exempted by the Naming Rules (such as legacy naming).

The types of groups Council may be required to consult with include:

- The immediate community, including residents, ratepayers and businesses within the immediate area directly affected by the naming proposal;
- The extended community, including residents, ratepayers and businesses surrounding the area directly affected by the proposal;
- any government (neighbouring councils) or non-government organisations with an interest in or who service the area;
- Registered Aboriginal Party/ies or traditional owner group/s, local historical societies, essential services providers, advisory committees and other community groups.

The amount of engagement/consultation will depend on the type of naming proposal. For example, naming of a park may draw the wider community interest and may require more extensive engagement. Community engagement and consultation may include:

- public notices in local newspapers;
- notice on Council's website;

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- notice on Council's social media;
- written correspondence to affected and abutting property owners/residents;
- Surveys or voting polls;
- Public Meetings.

The minimum consultation period will be no less than 30 days in accordance with the Naming Rules.

Approval

Following completion of consultation, consideration of any submissions and once a preferred name has agreed upon by the Road and Place Naming Committee, a final report detailing the outcome of the consultation and a recommendation will be presented to Council for consideration at a Scheduled Council Meeting.

Any objection or submission received during the consultation period must be considered, including deciding on any weight to be given to competing naming proposals submitted.

If Council approves a name, the naming proposal must be submitted to the Registrar of Geographic Names with details of the objections and submissions received and how they will be or have been dealt with. Council will advise submitters of its decision in writing in accordance with the Naming Rules. Objectors will have 30 days within which to lodge an appeal to the Registrar of Geographic Names.

It is important to note that approval of a name by Council does not make a name or locality boundary change official. This does not occur until the Registrar of Geographic Names advises that it has been approved, gazetted and added to VICNAMES. The Registrar will review the process undertaken by Council and undertake a compliance audit in accordance with the Naming Rules as part of its approval process. The Registrar has the authority under the Act to reject any proposal if it does not satisfy the Naming Rules.

The applicant, and all abutting property owners, residents and other interested parties will be notified of Council's decision after formal advice from the Registrar of Geographic Names.

Signage

All signage for a road, feature or locality must comply with the requirements for signage set out in the Naming Rules and related Australian Standards for road signs.

Renamed Roads

All signage must be erected by Council within 30 days of the new name being gazetted and registered. The Operations Department will order street name blades and arrange installation on receiving advice from Governance and Performance Team that a road name has been changed.

New Roads

In the case of a new subdivision the Developer is responsible for provision, cost and installation of signage to according to Council specifications and templates. Signage must be after certification and registration of the subdivision plans and within 30 days of commencement of infrastructure work in the event that emergency services may be required to respond to an incident.

Private Roads and Complex Sites

The provision, cost and installation of signage on private roads, complex sites and private features is the responsibility of the property owner or developer. Any signage for private roads/features should include reference to the fact that they are private and not open for the general public's access.

Street Numbering

The street numbering for public roads where Moira Shire is the Naming Authority is managed by the Revenue Team. All street numbers will be allocated in accordance with AS/NZS 4819-2011 - Rural & Urban Addressing standards.

Owners of complex sites are responsible for including street numbering on their site plans before submitting to Council as part of the complex site road naming process.

RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1989
Local Government Act 2020
Road Management Act 2004
Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018
Survey Co-Ordination Act 1958
Subdivision (Procedures) Regulations 2011
Geographic Place Names Act 1998
Gender Equality Act 2020

REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2022
Australian Standard AS/NZS 4819-2011 - Rural & Urban Addressing
Council Plan 2021 – 2025
Memorials and Plaques Policy
Community Engagement Policy