

Place Naming Policy

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Adopted by	Council
Review due	March 2029
Responsible officer	Senior Lawyer and Property Advisor
Records reference	11182020

1. Purpose

The Place Naming Policy (**the Policy**) has been developed to support the decision making of Melton City Council (**Council**) in decisions as the naming authority. The Policy will support a transparent and accountable framework for naming roads, places and localities within the City of Melton. The Policy will ensure that naming decisions are consistent with the Naming Rules for places in Victoria (**Naming Rules**) and provide a clear and consistent naming procedure.

The Policy will ensure:

- a. A consistent and concise approach is applied to all naming requests within the City of Melton;
- b. All City of Melton features, localities and places are named in line with the Naming Rules and registered officially for the benefit of the community.
- c. Ensure that the community is appropriately engaged and consulted with when naming places.

2. Application And Scope

Council is a naming authority pursuant to the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*. Council's authority to name places is derived from the section 10 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, schedule 10 part 5 of the *Local Government Act 1989* and section 11 of the *Road Management Act 2004*. As a naming authority, Council may initiate or receive requests from the community and other stakeholders to name publicly owned features, roads and localities. This policy should be read in accordance with the Naming Rules.

This Policy does not apply to any public feature or road where Council is not the naming authority. For example, VicRoads and the Department of Education may be the appropriate naming authority for public features which they own or manage.

The Policy and subsequent community engagement requirements may not be applied where Council is required to urgently consider a naming proposal in accordance with clause 6.1.2 of the Naming Rules. In this instance, Council may proceed with consideration of a naming proposal without consulting with the community where there is a persuasive reason to do so, such as on public safety grounds.

Council may at times, in unique and exceptional circumstances, resolve to consider a naming proposal which falls outside of this Policy but is compliant with the Naming Rules. Council must provide reasons as to this decision.

Informal naming requests may use this Policy as a guide but will not be bound by the requirements of the Policy. Council may choose to elect to engage with the community about informal naming requests.

3. General Provisions

Council will consider the following general provisions when naming publicly owned features, places and localities within the City of Melton.

3.1. The Naming Rules

This Naming Rules provide thirteen principles which Council aims to promote. The naming principles are:

Principle A – Ensuring public safety

Principle B – Recognising the public interest

Principle C – Linking the name to place

Principle D – Ensuring names are not duplicated

Principle E – Recognition and use of Traditional owner languages

Principle F – Names must not discriminate or be offensive

Principle G – Gender equality

Principle H – Dual names

Principle I – Using commemorative names

Principles J – Using commercial and business names

Principle K – Language

Principle L – Directional names to be avoided

Principle M – Assigning extend to a road, feature or locality

3.1.1. Naming Themes

The below four Key Themes have been designated by GNV as holding particular importance. Council will apply the Naming Rules to all proposals, noting the Key Themes may be prioritised when engaging in community consultation for naming.

1. KEY THEME3 ONE - PRINCIPLE C – LINKING THE NAME TO A PLACE

All proposals to name a place should ensure the preservation of the City of Melton's cultural heritage and should be relevant to the local area. Examples of names that may link a name to place may include but are not limited to; local flora and fauna, past exploration and settlement, local geography, significant local events, cultural diversity of past and current inhabitants.

2. KEY THEME TWO - PRINCIPLE E – RECOGNITION AND USE OF TRADITIONAL OWNER LANGUAGES

Traditional Owner language will be encouraged when naming a place. The use of Traditional Owner language will be subject to agreement from the relevant Registered Aboriginal party or Traditional owner group.

3. KEY THEME THREE - PRINCIPLE G – GENDER EQUALITY

The Gender Equality Act 2020 supports commemorative naming of places after women. Council recognises the diversity of the community and looks to promote inclusivity of all communities. When developing a naming proposal, key consideration will be given to gender equality.

As required by GNV, Council will give particular effect to Principle G by annually reporting on all places named by Council and the proportion of names for women and gender diverse people among all named places. Council will strive to ensure that places named for women and gender diverse people constitute two thirds of places named, in the 5 years following endorsement of this Policy.

4. KEY THEME FOUR - PRINCIPLE I – USING COMMEMORATIVE NAMES

Council will consider a commemorative naming proposal where a person has been deceased for a period of no less than two years, as guided by the naming rules Council will not consider commemorative names after any person who is alive or has not been deceased for two years, unless by resolution of Council and where the proposal is supported by Geographic Names Victoria.

In addition, any proposal to name a place after a person must demonstrate that the individual has made significant community contributions. Significant community contributions may include but is not limited to achievements, volunteerism, relevant history or association to the local area or other significance of a person/family.

Commemorative names will require consultation with the individual's family. Council will not progress any commemorative naming proposal where the family objects to the proposed name.

3.2. Community Consultation

Council will seek to consult with the community as early as is deemed practicable. Consultation will depend on the type of feature to be named, the location of that feature and those groups which may have an interest in the name of the feature.

Council retains the discretion to determine if the immediate community or extended community must be consulted with or notified of a change. *Immediate community* means people who live and work within the immediate area and owners of properties or business. *Extended community* includes residents, ratepayers, Emergency Service Providers and businesses surrounding the area which in the opinion of Officers, may be significantly affected by the proposal.

Council will consult with the following individuals and groups in line with the below table. Council may also choose to engage with other groups where Officers determine they may have a unique interest in the naming of a place or feature.

Community Engagement will be in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and the minimum consultation requirements contained in Section 7 of the Naming Rules.

Local Parks	Local parks will be named using the road name the land is addressed to. If this is non-compliant with the Naming Rules, another abutting road name will be used. Council may choose to consider an alternate name, which is deemed appropriate and that promotes the Key Naming Theme. The final decision may only be made by resolution of Council.
Roads	New Road Council works collaboratively with developers to create road names for new subdivisions which are compliant with the Naming Rules. The responsibility for new road naming, remains with the developers and will be approved by Council's subdivisions team, with key consideration given to the four naming themes set out in clause 3.1.1. Council will not consult with the community where a road or feature to be named is within a new subdivision with no effect on the immediate community. Renaming Roads will be named on an as needs basis, for example, where a development requires a road suffix change for strategic planning purposes. Internal teams will be requested to suggest proposed names for roads, to be considered by the Head of Governance. Where a new road name is being proposed, the matter will be referred to Council for consideration.

Significant Features

Where confusion would be caused by not including the feature's location within the name, the location will be included in the proposed name. Where a significant feature does not require the features name to be included in the name, Council will carry out a **two-step** consultation process.

1. Council will seek community feedback on a preferred naming theme as contained in the Naming Rules and set out in this Policy, including inviting community suggestions for names.
2. Where the preferred naming theme is Theme Two: Recognition and use of traditional owner language, Council will seek the name/s from the Traditional Owner Group directly. If the Traditional Owner Group do not consent to the use of traditional owner language for the nominated feature, the second preferred naming theme will be utilised.
3. Officers will review all proposed names and longlist all names which are compliant with the Naming Rules and in line with this Policy.
4. Officers will shortlist up to five names, for Council consideration and endorsement for further community consultation.
5. Following Council resolution, Council will invite community feedback on the shortlisted name/s.
6. Officers will consider all feedback received and produce a report for formal consideration and a decision by Council of the preferred name.
7. Council will publish a public notice on the final proposed name in accordance with the Naming Rules before lodging the proposed name with Geographic Names Victoria.

The process flow chart is provided at Appendix 1.

Community consultation will always be exhibited on Council's website and where requested by the Chief Executive Officer or Head of Governance, on Council's social media or in a newspaper circulated throughout the City of Melton.

Council Officers will refer any decided name to the Registrar of Geographical Names for gazettal. Council will install required signage and record the history behind the name in VICNAMES.

3.3. Decision Not To Proceed With Consideration Of Naming Proposal

Council's Chief Executive Officer may choose not to proceed with a naming proposal, where:

- a. The naming proposal seeks to change an existing compliant name, which is familiar to the local community and there is no compelling reason to consider a name change; or
- b. Where the proposed name is non-compliant with the Naming Rules;
- c. The proposed name is the same as or substantially similar to an application which has already been subject to Council decision or decision by Officer under delegation;
- d. The proposed name is a repeated, frivolous, unreasonable or otherwise vexatious request.

3.4. Procedural Guidelines

Council may initiate naming requests internally or may receive requests from members of the community or external stakeholder. Council may self-initiate a place naming process where a Significant Feature requires a name, there is a need to assign or amend the name of a place to ensure clarity or safety, construction or development will create a new place that is to be named, or the Head of Governance determines there is another sufficient reason to do so.

The s7 instrument of delegation, delegate the power to approve, assign or change the name of a road to five members of Council staff, being the Head of Governance, Manager Governance, Coordinator Governance, Senior Lawyer & Property Advisor and Lawyer. The power must be exercised in accordance with the Act and will most often be exercised for administrative name changes, such as to change the suffix of a road name to reflect the appropriate road type.

Where the power to make a decision to name a feature, locality or road is not delegated, a report will be presented to Council for formal consideration. Officers may also elect to present the decision to Council for consideration where naming any feature, locality or road may be deemed to be particularly controversial or is of high community interest.

Any submission to name a place should be in writing to Council by web form, email or postal mail. Applicants will be encouraged to consider this Policy and the Naming Rules prior to making a submission.

Each submission must include:

- a. The proposed name of the place;
- b. A precise description or map of the place to be named;
- c. Arguments in support of proposed name;

The later of 90 days of receipt of a valid submission, or receipt of requested further information, a Council Officer must either:

- i. Reject the proposed name and provide the basis for the rejection;
- ii. Request further information of the submitter;
- iii. Notify the submitter that the proposed name will progress through the process set forth in this Policy and proceed as soon as practicable.

3.5. Fees

Where a request to name a place is as a direct result of a new development, or is requested by a developer, the proponent of that development will be responsible for all fees associated with the process under the Policy, public consultation and lodgment with the Registrar.

Where a request to name a place is initiated by Council, or by an individual or community group and is not related to a new or in progress development, the costs will be borne by Council.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Community Engagement Policy	Means Melton City Council's Community Engagement Policy which may change from time to time.
Feature	Includes mountains, watercourses, buildings, structures, parks and reserves
Naming Rules	Means the Naming Rules for places in Victoria (Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022) or any document which replaces it.
Place	means any place or building that is, or is likely to be, of public interest and includes, but is not restricted to: a) township, area, park, garden, reserve of land, suburb and locality; b) topographical feature, including undersea feature; street, road, transport station, government school, government hospital, and government nursing home.

Registered Aboriginal Party	Means a body that is registered under Part 10 of the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i> . At the date of this Policy being endorsed, there are three RAP's in the City of Melton, Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.
Significant Feature	Means a locality; or a new major road; or a new major bridge; or a large civic, community or recreation building built by the Council; active open space; or any other place deemed by the Head of Governance to be significant.

5. Related Documents

Name	Location
<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>	https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/local-government-act-2020
<i>Local Government Act 1989</i>	Local Government Act 1989 legislation.vic.gov.au
<i>Road Management Act 2004</i>	Road Management Act 2004 legislation.vic.gov.au
<i>Geographic Names Act 1998</i>	Microsoft Word - SLR98-7AAD.011.DOCX

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Appendix 1 – Flow chart for naming of Significant Features

