

# Naming Policy



<b>Title</b>	<b>Naming Policy</b>
<b>Summary</b>	The Naming Policy provides guidance and direction for the unambiguous, unique, and official naming of parks, reserves, public open spaces, roads, buildings, facilities and rooms that are either owned or under the care and control of Inner West Council
<b>Document Type</b>	Council Policy
<b>Relevant Strategic Plan Objective</b>	Strategic Direction 5: Progressive, responsive, and effective civic leadership
<b>Legislative Reference</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Geographic Names Act 1966</i></li> <li>• <i>Local Government Act 1993</i></li> <li>• <i>Roads Act 1993</i> and Section 7 of the Roads Regulation 2008</li> </ul>
<b>Related Council Documents</b>	<p>This policy supersedes the following former policy documents:</p> <p><b>Ashfield Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naming of Municipal Reserves 1998</li> </ul> <p><b>Leichhardt Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naming of Public Places Aboriginal Names 1996</li> <li>• Naming of Roads, Parks, Reserves and Public Spaces 2014</li> </ul> <p><b>Marrickville Council</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal Naming Policy 2016</li> <li>• Naming of Roads and Lanes Policy 2016</li> </ul>
<b>Version Control</b>	See last page

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## 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and direction for the unambiguous, unique, and official naming of the following:

- buildings, facilities, and rooms
- parks and reserves
- public open spaces
- streets, roads, and laneways

under its ownership or care and control of Inner West Council.

Names are important for navigation and wayfinding and are critical reference tools for the community. Names serve to identify historical and local significance and to reflect the Inner West's aspirations, history, and values and to mark the important relationships between people and place. Names are most effective when they are unique. In some cases, changing street or road names will be recommended as a result of the location of suburb boundaries.

The policy serves to bring flexibility, pragmatism, and common sense to what can be a complex or challenging process. The policy seeks to strike the balance between being responsive to local need, while avoiding confusion and ambiguity.

This policy ensures that naming principles meet legislative requirements while providing consistency in approach and clarity about naming opportunities.

The *Geographical Names Act 1966* and regulations form the statutory basis for naming places and the [policy of the NSW Geographical Names Board](#) provides operational guidance that gives effect to the statutory intent.

The *Local Government Act 1993* provides the statutory authority for Inner West Council in naming roads and places under its ownership or care and control. Where necessary, endorsed naming proposals are submitted to the Geographical Names Board for approval and/or registration.

## 2 Scope

The Naming Policy outlines Council's approach to naming, renaming or dual naming Council owned or controlled:

- buildings, facilities and rooms
- parks and reserves
- public open spaces
- streets, roads, and laneways.

The policy provides principles for proposing, agreeing, and approving a new name; for changing a name; for naming previously unnamed locations; for joining up separated

streets; for correcting anomalies; or where dual naming of places and buildings is considered.

The policy confirms Council’s commitment to recognising the Traditional Custodians of the Inner West and celebrating the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the area. This includes the potential use of Aboriginal language names and the recognition of significant Aboriginal events and culture in the public domain.

## 3 Definitions

In the Naming Policy, the following terms have the following meanings:

Terms	Definitions
<b>Acts</b>	<i>Geographic Names Act 1966</i> <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> <i>Roads Act 1993 and Roads Regulation 2008</i>
<b>Council Officer</b>	Inner West Council members of staff
<b>Councillor</b>	Inner West Council elected representative
<b>Inner West Local Government Area</b>	The Inner West Local Government Area includes the following suburbs (or some of these suburbs):  Annandale, Ashfield, Balmain, Balmain East, Birchgrove, Dobroyd Point, Dulwich Hill, Enmore, Haberfield, Leichhardt, Lewisham, Lilyfield, Marrickville, Newtown, Petersham, Rozelle, Stanmore, St Peters, Summer Hill, Sydenham, and Tempe. As well as parts of Ashbury, Camperdown, Croydon, Croydon Park, Hurlstone Park, and Newtown.
<b>Public Road</b>	Any road that is opened, dedicated, or declared to be a public road under the <i>Roads Act 1993</i> . Some public roads are under the control and authority of Inner West Council. Other roads are under state control.
<b>Private Road</b>	A private road is any road that is not a public road. For the purposes of this policy, a private road is one on a private property that is not under Council control.

## 4 Statement

Uniqueness is essential in naming. All proposals for place naming must conform to the Geographical Names Board's naming principles. Name duplications must be avoided, including homophones or other similarities in names. Duplicate road names in close proximity to those in other suburbs or council areas are to be avoided.

Opportunities to consider new names for roads, parks and open spaces, and buildings, include redevelopment and urban renewal where locations have been significantly changed, changes in ownership, and identification of Council spaces that have not been formally named. Changing demographics can also provide opportunities to consider naming proposals.

Naming of rooms in buildings needs to balance utility and wayfinding, with uniqueness and recognition of local identity. The key purpose must remain helping local people navigate to the room.

Changing an existing name is discouraged unless the change is in the public interest, for the sake of uniqueness or for safety reasons. It requires consideration regarding the views of members of the public, expenses incurred in updating maps and digital systems, and possible loss of the history of an area. Council's preference for sources of names includes:

- Aboriginal language names as first preference where such a name is both dignified appropriate, particularly thematic names such as language for flora or fauna
- local history and heritage as second preference with references to Council's diverse multicultural history including people who have made significant contributions to the life of the Inner West, eminent residents, commemorating outstanding women and commemorative names. Gender diversity is encouraged.

Connection to Country through language, cultural practice and long held relationships are intrinsically connected to identity for Aboriginal peoples. This policy encourages recognition of Aboriginal place names with the aim to promote frequent and official use of these names. Reinstatement of Aboriginal place names through the dual naming process reflects a Council commitment in the Reconciliation Action Plan to recognise Aboriginal cultural heritage.

For an Aboriginal name to be considered for use the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee and peoples and the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council must be consulted ahead of formal referral of the proposed change to Council or the Geographical Names Board for approval. This includes any proposals to assign new names, alter spellings of existing names, or assign dual names.

A dual naming system may be used when a non-Aboriginal assigned geographical name already exists for places of physical and environmental significance to the local



Aboriginal community or the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council. The use of Aboriginal naming for Council's wards is such an example.

Dual naming may also occur where it is seen that an additional cultural reference is seen as warranted. Examples of this is the application of the little village names across numerous main streets in the Inner West including Little Italy, Little Portugal, Little Vietnam and Little Greece.

As a matter of principle, each use of the name of an Aboriginal person or an Aboriginal name should be unique and not repeated.

The following are a list of names approved for use by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee and Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Lands Council:

- Bandicoot – Burruga
- Bark Canoe – Nawi
- Bat – Wirambi
- Black Duck – Yurungay
- Dingo/southern sky constellation – Dingu
- Oyster – Badangi
- Possum – Wali
- Sulphur crested Cockatoo – Garraway
- Tea Tree – Bunya
- Wattle – Wadanguli.

## 5 Policy

### Approval process

Submission of a naming proposal by Council should be supported by a Council resolution. Evidence of community engagement on the proposal must support the recommendations to Council.

The extent and nature of the community engagement will depend on the significance of the proposed change and might include:

- community engagement sessions and use of *Your Say Inner West*
- notice to residents directly through letter box drops or through the monthly Council newsletter
- engagement with the local associations and business chambers.

The formal approval process includes:

1. proposed name identified
2. public engagement for 28 days including notification of landowners and residents whose property boundary adjoins the area under consideration will be notified in writing of the proposal

3. results of the public exhibition period and recommendations will be considered by Council for decision
4. proposals approved by Council are referred to the Geographic Names Board for consideration and decision by the Minister
5. if approved by the Geographic Names Board, the new name is published in the NSW Government Gazette, and mapping databases and the Geographic Names Register are updated.
6. Council then communicates the change to affected local property owners, residents, and businesses.

## Performance conditions

Commercial and business names are not to be used for geographical names. Business names no longer in use and which promote the heritage of an area are acceptable. Use of a name associated with a club, society, association, or special interest group is discouraged.

Dignity and propriety should be maintained. Some buildings and locations should not be named. Others, for example, public toilets, changing rooms, former night soil lanes, or very small spaces should not be named for people. Instead, consideration might be given to using book titles, cultural references, or names of flora and fauna or similar names.

Where a name commemorating an individual is being considered the following principles apply:

- given name and family name must be used, and any informal name or nickname might be included, but must be in parentheses. Biographical information may be included on signage, with approval from appropriate family/friends.
- commemorative names might arise from exceptional accomplishments or events that are reason to commemorate a person, event or place including particularly community service
- commemorative names should only be applied posthumously, at least two years after the death of the individual being acknowledged
- the Aboriginal Advisory Committee must be consulted before any commemoration of an Aboriginal person is considered
- names of living persons, persons currently holding public office, or people killed in tragic or disaster scenarios should not be considered for use.

## 6 Breaches of this Policy

Breaches of this policy may result in an investigation of the alleged breach in line with relevant Council policies including the Model Code of Conduct.

Any alleged criminal offence or allegation of corrupt conduct will be referred to the relevant external agency.



## 7 Administrative Changes

From time-to-time circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made including branding, Council Officer titles or department changes and legislative name or title changes which are considered minor in nature and not required to be formally endorsed.

## 8 Version Control – Policy History

This policy will be formally reviewed every three years from the date of adoption or as required.

Governance use only:

Document	Naming Policy	<i>Uncontrolled Copy When Printed</i>	
<b>Custodian</b>	Social and Cultural Planning Manager	Version #	Version 1
<b>Adopted By</b>	Council	ECM Document #	39576347
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Amended by	Changes made	Date Adopted	
Social and Cultural Planning	IWC policy created	3 September 2024	