

ASSET NAMING

COUNCIL POLICY NO. 098

1. POLICY PURPOSE

This policy will guide through the process when selecting, approving or assigning names for:

- Roads and localities for new subdivisions;
- For existing unnamed roads (incl. streets) and features (including reserves, open spaces and facilities); and
- To change the name of existing roads, features and localities.

Place naming plays a vital role in shaping community identity and preserving cultural heritage. This policy provides guidance on naming roads, features, and localities within the Gannawarra Shire municipality. It ensures naming practices are inclusive, culturally respectful, and reflective of Gannawarra's values and history.

Additionally, the policy aligns with the process and requirements outlined in the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory Requirements for Naming Roads, Features and Localities 2022 document issued under Section 5 of the Geographic Place Names Act 1998. This document provides the framework for the naming process which must be followed to ensure compliance with the statute.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to Gannawarra Shire Councillors, employees, contractors, volunteers, ratepayers, and other clients who initiate or consider formal naming requests. This policy addresses the following:

- Management of requests for naming, renaming, or amending the name of roads, features, or localities, referred to as "place naming requests."
- Procedures to ensure place names are inclusive, preserve local history, and reflect the values of the Gannawarra Shire community.
- Compliance with relevant laws and guidelines, ensuring place names are easily recognisable and support emergency response and disaster relief efforts.
- Community and stakeholder consultation requirements for place naming proposals.
- Information management and record-keeping protocols to maintain accountability, transparency, and the preservation of Victorian State heritage.

3. POLICY

The importance of having appropriate names for streets (roads), features and localities is recognised to enable the efficient and orderly operation of services in our community including emergency, postal and transport services as well as facilitating good community communication.

Council has responsibility under the (Section 11 Cl 8) Road Management Act 2004 and the (Schedule 10 Cl 5) Local Government Act 1989 for the naming of roads and streets. And as a Naming Authority under the Geographic Place Names Act 1998, Council is responsible for managing place naming requests and initiating place naming proposals within its municipal district.

3.1 Place Naming Process

All place naming proposals must adhere to the requirements outlined in the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory Requirements for Naming Roads, Features and Localities 2022. The following provides further guidance on how Council manages place naming requests and proposals.

3.1.1 Initiating a place naming request

Any person or organisation (unless restricted by the “naming themes” section 3.1.2 of this policy) can initiate a request to name or rename a road, feature or locality, and such request may include a naming proposal. Such requests must include background and purpose context information, and all naming proposals must meet the requirements of this policy and the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory Requirements for Naming Roads, Features and Localities 2022.

Council encourages applicants to use the checklist in the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory Requirements for Naming Roads, Features and Localities 2022 to ensure all necessary supporting information is provided with the request. Requests must be submitted in writing or by email to council@gsc.vic.gov.au or by mail to PO Box 287, Kerang VIC 3579

3.1.2 Gannawarra Naming Themes

In accordance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2022 to ensure that the proposed names are consistent and relevant to the Gannawarra community, the Council has shortlisted the following naming themes and nomination criteria:

Naming Theme	Nomination Criteria
Australian native flora and fauna	Can be nominated by any person or organisation. Proposals must include the details of the animal / insect / plant.
Local (to Gannawarra) geography and geology	Can be nominated by any person or organisation. Proposals must include the context describing how the proposed name links to the theme.
Commemoration of an event, person or place	<p>Council will accept nominations only if proposed by a local community organisation / club / group. Proposals to name after living individuals or less than two years posthumously will not be accepted.</p> <p>Proposals must include all evidence required under the Principle I - Using commemorative names of the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2022.</p>
Past exploration and settlement	Can be nominated by any person or organisation. Must not be commemorative and include context describing relevance to the area.
Patterns of land usage / agricultural production	Can be nominated by any person or organisation. Proposals must include context describing relevance to the area.
Traditional Owner culture / languages	Council will accept nominations only if proposed by a formal Traditional Owner group (recognised through the Native Title Act 1993 as native title holders / or through the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 as traditional owner group entity) or a Registered Aboriginal Party (under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006). Proposals must include context describing relevance to the area.

3.1.3 Consideration of road / place naming requests

Naming of roads / features for new subdivisions: Council will work with developers to create compliant road names for residential and commercial subdivisions. Plans of subdivision must be approved by Council. Road names are registered after Council has certified and issued a statement of compliance for the plan of subdivision.

Naming / renaming of existing roads, features and localities (excluding subdivisions): Council will assess place naming requests in accordance with this policy and the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria. If the Council determines that the request is valid and compliant with this policy and the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria, the proposal will proceed to the consultation stage. Council will consider all requests in accordance with the 13 naming principles as set out in the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria and the themes / criteria adopted by Council (Section 3.1.2 of this policy).

Additional considerations for renaming: Requests for renaming of roads, features and localities will only be considered if it can be shown that the name as it is registered will cause an issue for emergency or other service providers or is determined by the Naming Authority or the Registrar of Geographic Names to be offensive or derogatory.

3.1.4 Consultation

Council is committed to incorporating the views and perspectives of its diverse community in the place naming process. Following the initial review of a place naming request or proposal, Council will determine the most appropriate method of community consultation, in line with Section 7 of the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria and the Council's Community Engagement Policy. The consultation process will meet the minimum requirements specified in Section 7.1 of the Naming Rules. Council will carefully consider any feedback received during the consultation phase before making a final decision on the proposal.

Except for where a commemorative or Traditional Owner name was proposed, during the consultation Council will be open to considering alternative proposals across all adopted naming themes, and if valid alternative proposals are received the preferred name will be determined via a public poll.

3.1.5 Registration of place names

Once a naming proposal is endorsed by the Council or approved by an Officer with delegated authority under Section 11, Clause 8 of the Road Management Act 2004, the new or amended place names must be submitted to the Registrar of Geographic Names for endorsement, gazettal, and inclusion in the Register of Geographic Names.

A place naming decision is only considered final when the Registrar of Geographic Names confirms that the proposed name complies with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria and officially enters it into the Register of Geographic Names.

3.1.6 Recording historical information

For new names with substantial context (e.g. commemorative / Traditional Owner names), documenting the background information behind the naming of a road, feature, or locality is essential. This practice preserves historical context for future generations and ensures transparency throughout the naming process.

By maintaining detailed records of the reasons for specific place names, Council aims to promote accountability and provide valuable insights into the cultural, historical, or geographical significance that shaped the decision. This information becomes a key reference for future community members and decision-makers, supporting informed place naming practices over time.

Where adequate and referenced (to an appropriate source) information was provided, Council will enter the available historical information and copies of relevant documents on the new name, including explanation why the name was chosen and how the name has connections to the local area.

Once the name is included in the Register of Geographic Names, anyone can upload further historical information to VICNAMES for a single or multiple names in the Register. All new entries must be done in accordance with the Section 14.4.1 of the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria, which provides further guidance on this process.

4. POLICY REVIEW

Council will review this policy as required but always within two years after a general election of the Council.

At the time it was developed, this policy was compliant with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

5. FURTHER INFORMATION

Naming Rules for Places in Victoria – Statutory Requirements for Naming Roads, Features and Localities 2022 document can be reviewed here: https://www.land.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0018/501093/official-naming-rules-for-places-in-victoria-2022.docx.

Or if you would like to receive the Naming Rules document in an alternative format, please telephone the DEECA Customer Service Centre on 136 186, email customer.service@deeca.vic.gov.au or via the National Relay Service on 133 677 / www.relayservice.com.au.

Members of the public may inspect all Council policies at Gannawarra Shire Council's Kerang and Cohuna Offices, or online at www.gannawarra.vic.gov.au.

Any enquiries in relation to this policy should be directed to the Director Infrastructure and Development on (03) 5450 9333.

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