

# Guidelines for Geographic Names 2010

A guide to naming or renaming features,  
localities and roads in Victoria

# Section 3

## Localities

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## Section 3: Localities

### Definition

A locality is an administrative geographical area of Victoria that has been distinguished for its community's and/or landscape's characteristics. In metropolitan areas it is commonly referred to as a 'suburb'. Every locality has officially recognised and registered boundaries that do not overlap with those of other localities. Because of its unique and unambiguous name and boundaries, a locality provides an official reference point for addressing purposes.

A neighbourhood is not a locality because it does not have officially recognised and registered boundaries. For this reason, a neighbourhood name cannot be used for addressing purposes.

### Using this section of the guidelines

This section outlines how localities in Victoria can be named and renamed, and also defines how the boundaries can be altered.

Information included in this section is to be used in conjunction with the principles and policies outlined in Section 1 of these guidelines.

#### **The information in this section is divided into four parts**

**Section 3.1:** Principles applying to localities

**Section 3.2:** Creation of new localities by municipal councils

**Section 3.3:** Creation of new localities by government departments and authorities

**Section 3.4:** Alterations or changes to existing locality name(s) or boundaries

### Responsibility for registering locality names and boundaries

In most instances, the administration of locality naming, renaming and boundary definition is the responsibility of the municipal council within which the locality is situated. There are two exceptions to this.

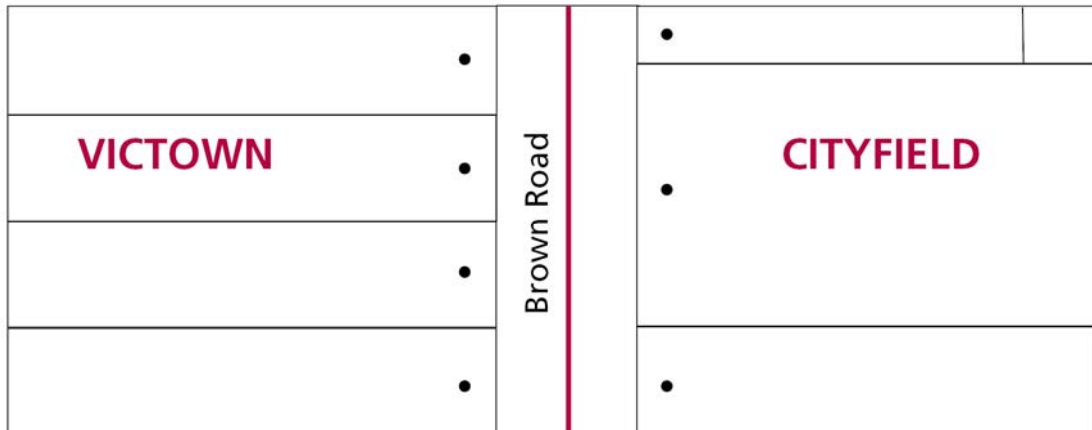
- In some instances a locality is positioned across two or more municipal areas. In this instance, all affected municipalities need to coordinate the naming or renaming or any boundary changes, and the final proposal will be assessed by a Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee (refer to Section 1.5(f)).
- In other instances an area being considered for a new locality name might fall under the jurisdiction of a government department or authority undertaking a major land redevelopment project. There are specific guidelines for these types of proposals, which are provided in Section 3.3.

### 3.1 Principles applying to localities

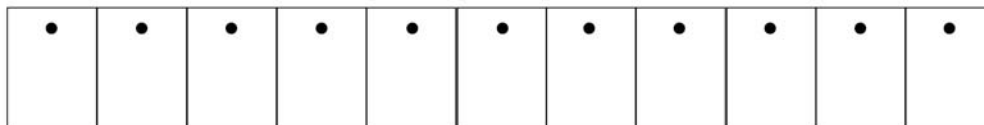
#### Principle 3(A) Boundary location

Locality boundaries should align with the cadastral fabric, road centre lines or easily distinguishable topographical features such as waterways or ridgelines. Essentially, the following conventions should be applied:

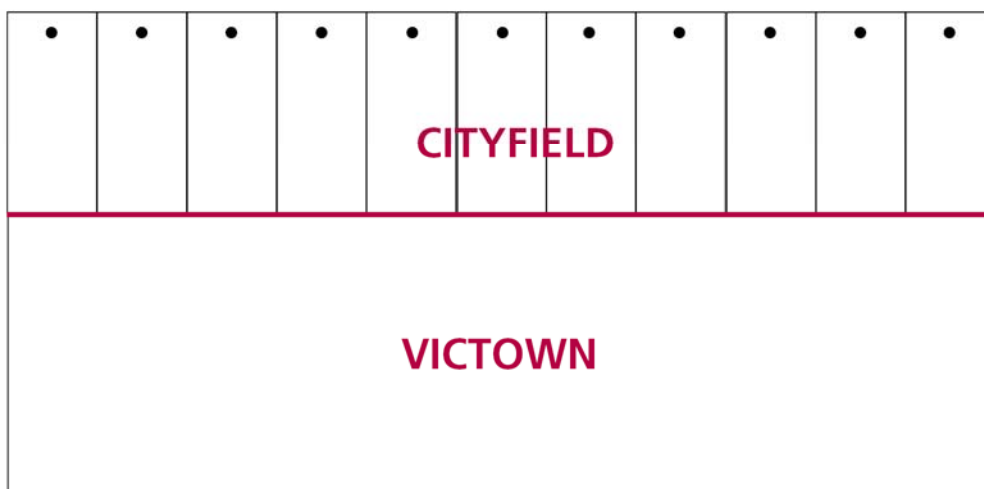
1. If major roads separate communities, the boundary for a locality should be placed along the road centre line. In cases of dual carriageways, please contact the Office of Geographic Names (OGN) to discuss boundary options.



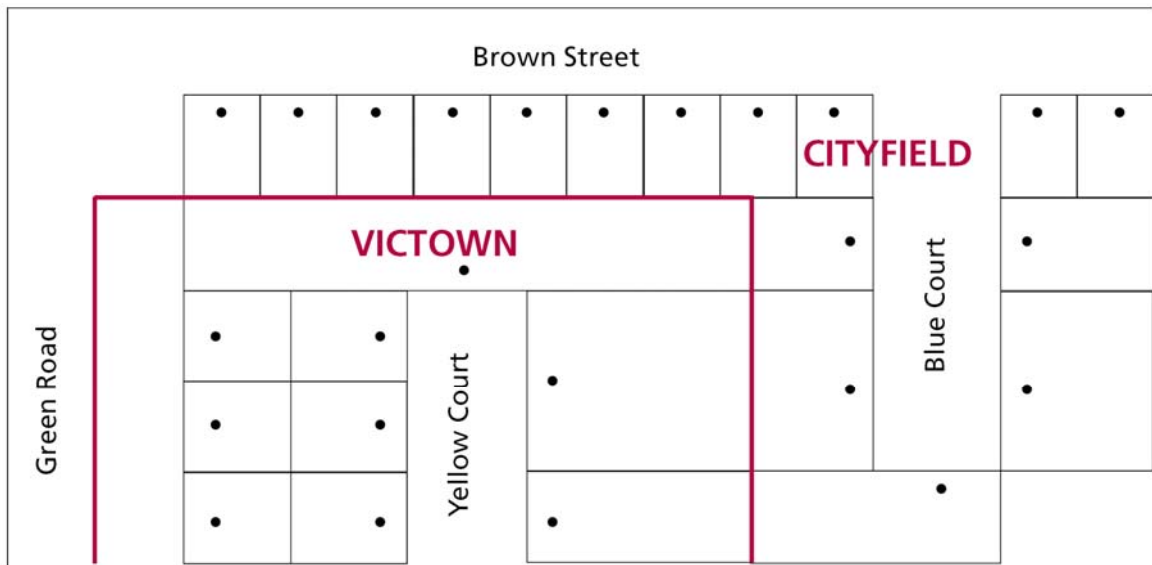
2. If residents and businesses in minor roads are deemed to be part of the same community, it is advisable to place the locality boundary along the back boundary of properties facing the road.



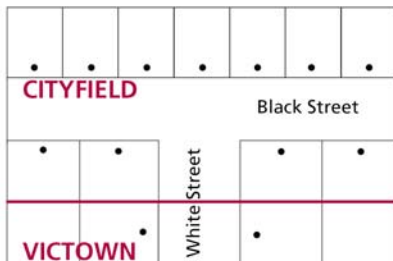
Orange Street



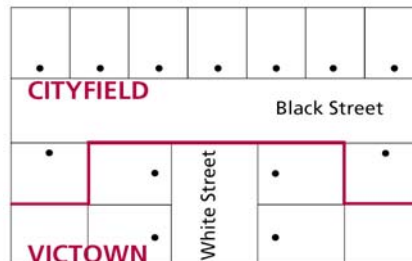
- In dead-end roads and culs-de-sac, the locality boundary should wrap around the properties at the end of the road so that all properties accessed from the same road are addressed to the same locality.



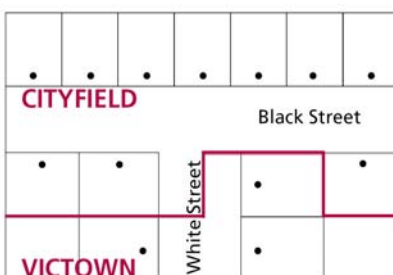
- The locality boundary for corner blocks should be the same as those for neighbouring properties accessed from the same road. There are four options for this location of boundaries, as shown in diagrams a., b., c. and d. below.



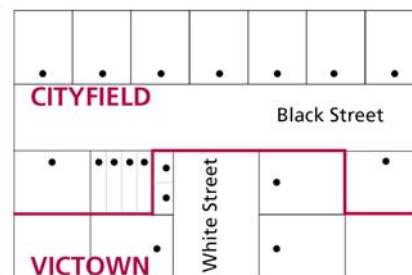
**Diagram a.**



**Diagram b.**



**Diagram c.**



**Diagram d.**

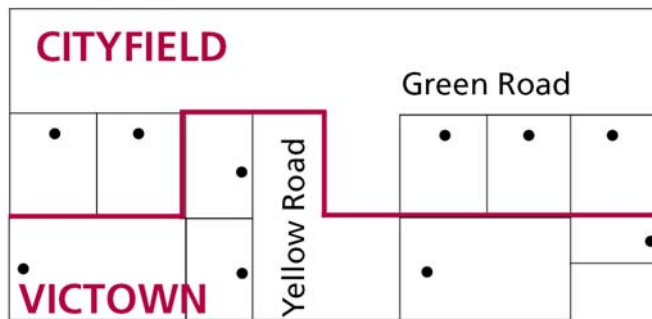
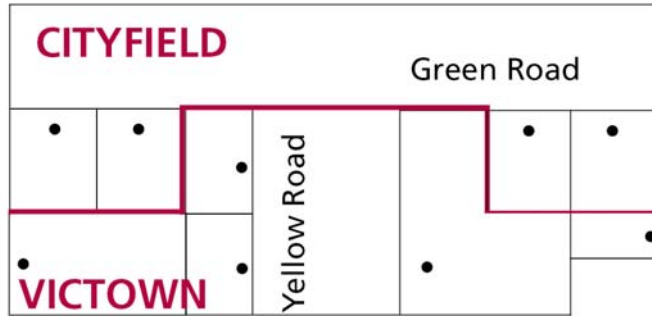
**Diagram a.** shows how boundaries should be applied to properties on corner blocks accessed from Black Street.

**Diagram b.** shows how boundaries should be applied for properties accessed from White Street.

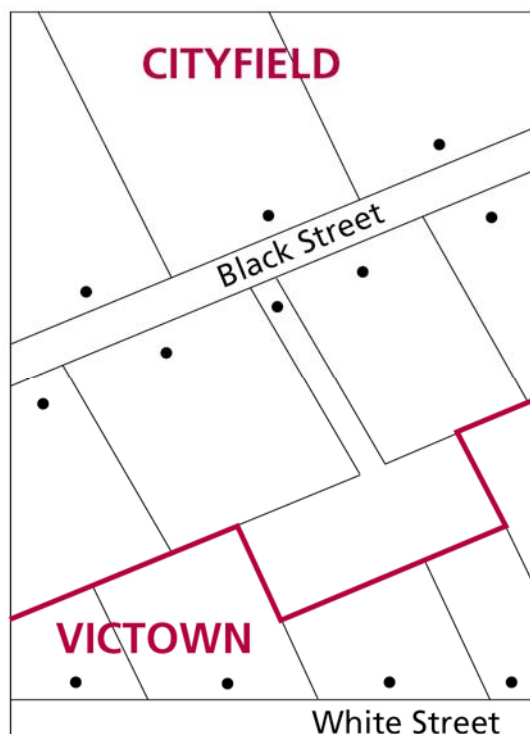
**Diagram c.** shows how boundaries should be applied for properties where one corner block is accessed from Black Street and the other is accessed from White Street.

**Diagram d.** shows one option on how to apply a locality boundary where multiple shop fronts or residences on one property have access to both Black Street and White Street. As there are multiple options in these cases, contact the OGN for advice.

5. If a property is situated on a corner and the block is subdivided with one or more of the new properties accessed from a road generally defined as being addressed to a different locality, the locality boundary should be changed to incorporate the new subdivided properties. For example:



6. Locality boundaries should take into account the location of battle-axe properties. Ideally, where a property is accessed through a right-of-way or private roadway from a road that forms part of a locality boundary, the locality boundary should incorporate the battle-axe property.



7. If a natural feature such as a waterway or ridgeline is to be used as the boundary for a locality, the boundary should be applied to the centreline of the feature. Exemptions to this include the Murray River, lakes, major rivers and ocean or sea boundaries. In these instances contact the OGN for advice.
8. A locality must not be defined as an island within another locality. For instance, all localities must have boundaries that run alongside two or more other localities, or one other locality and a state or sea boundary.

### **Principle 3(B) Estate and subdivision names**

The names for estates and subdivisions are considered to be neighbourhood names; therefore, they are not officially recognised for addressing purposes. If a council is considering creating a new locality for an area that contains newly created estates and subdivisions, preference should always be given to creating a new unique name that characterises the landscape or history of the area.

Councils should be careful in the selection process to ensure that the proposed name of the new locality conforms to all of the principles outlined in Section 1 of these guidelines, particularly by linking the name to the place and not naming places after commercial interests.

### **Principle 3(C) Size**

All communities and landscape features can vary in size; therefore, it can be difficult to define how small or large any one locality may be.

Generally, a locality will be defined for the purposes of assisting delivery of emergency or postal services. Therefore, a locality cannot be so small that it makes it difficult to distinguish from the surrounding area. A locality also cannot be so large that it confuses members of the public about where the boundaries lie. Councils must be able to demonstrate that proposed boundaries for a locality will make sense to local residents and businesses as well as visitors.

### **Principle 3(D) Hyphens**

Hyphens are not to be used in a locality's name.

### **Principle 3(E) Local government area boundary review**

Where a locality boundary extends across two or more local government area boundaries, the boundaries of the locality should be reviewed with the intention of aligning them with the local government area.

## **3.2 Creation of new localities by municipal councils**

A checklist summarising the key points below, which municipal councils can use to prepare a proposal for the Registrar's office, is available at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines).

### **Why create a new locality?**

Municipal councils play an important role in ensuring that localities in all areas of Victoria are properly defined and named.

With increases in the Victorian population there are new residential and business areas being developed on a regular basis. Councils should ensure that they regularly review their locality boundaries and assess whether they adequately define the existing situation.

If major developments considered to be unique to an area are proposed, for example a set of subdivisions readily distinguishable from the surrounding landscape, municipal councils should consider creating a new locality.

The benefits of creating a new locality relate to allowing the area's residents and businesses to use a unique name for addressing purposes.

If the proposed locality is situated across two or more municipal areas, the collaborating councils should contact OGN for advice and coordination assistance.

The following section of these guidelines contains a step-by-step guide on how to implement the process if a proposed locality falls within one or more municipal areas.

### **3.2.1 How to initiate a proposal**

#### **General public**

Members of the general public can submit a proposal to create a new locality to the municipal council(s) responsible for the area in which the locality is situated. Proposals should include:

- background detail on why the council(s) should consider creating the new locality;
- the proposed name and boundaries for the locality;
- details on why the particular name and boundaries are considered to be appropriate;
- contact details of the proposer(s) and information on public consultation that has occurred and/or support that has been gathered from members or groups of the community; and
- an indication that the proposed name and boundaries conform to the principles outlined in Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines.

Upon receiving the proposal from the public, the responsible staff member(s) of the council(s) should initiate the formal proposal process detailed in Section 3.2.2 of these guidelines. If a proposal is to create a new locality across two or more municipal areas, the staff of the respective councils need to coordinate the proposal's processing based on the policies and principles of this section of the guidelines.

#### **Emergency response or other public service providers**

Staff of organisations that deal with emergency response services or other public services can submit a suggestion or proposal to create a new locality to the municipal council(s) responsible for the area in which the locality is located. The provider may only submit a proposal if it can be demonstrated to be in the community's interest. Proposals should include:

- background detail on why the council(s) should consider creating the new locality;
- the proposed name and boundaries for the locality;
- details on why the particular name and boundaries are considered to be appropriate; and
- an indication that the proposed name and boundaries conform to the principles outlined in Section 1 and 3 of these guidelines.

Upon receiving the proposal from the emergency or other service provider, the responsible staff member(s) of the council(s) should initiate the formal proposal process detailed in Section 3.2.2 of these guidelines.

If a proposal is to create a locality situated across two or more municipal areas, the staff of the respective councils need to coordinate the proposal's processing based on the policies and principles of this section of the guidelines.

**If a request is made in the interests of public safety, the municipal council must respond within 30 days and action the request within one council meeting of that initial response.**

### **Municipal councils**

Councils can generate a proposal in-house to create a new locality. Councils can hold a public naming competition for the new locality (but not a competition for the boundaries). In these instances the council should contact OGN and the processes described in Section 3.3.1(b) should be adopted for council use.

If the council is seeking to develop a naming or renaming proposal that uses an Indigenous name(s), contact should be made with relevant Indigenous communities at the outset of the proposal development process to seek their input.

Information on this consultation process is available from Principle 1(K) and the supplementary document *Consulting with Indigenous Groups* available from [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines).

Once a name and boundaries have been selected, councils should initiate the formal proposal process detailed in Section 3.2.2 of these guidelines.

### **3.2.2 Formal proposal process**

#### **Step 1 Check information**

Check all necessary information has been provided by the party proposing the name. If insufficient, request that additional information is supplied within 30 days.

#### **Step 2 Apply the principles**

Upon selection of a name and boundaries, municipal councils should check that the proposal conforms to all of the principles outlined in Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines.

If the proposal does not comply with the principles, or council determines that the proposal is frivolous in nature, council is encouraged to contact the OGN for advice. The proposal could be modified for compliance or rejected at this stage

#### **Step 3 Consult with Indigenous communities**

If the proposed name is derived from an Indigenous Australian language, from the outset the municipal council should consult with and obtain the input and approval of the relevant local Indigenous group(s). Details on the consultation process are provided in Principle 1(K) and the supplementary document *Consulting with Indigenous Groups* available from [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines).

#### **Step 4 Consult with emergency response and other public service providers**

When councils have ensured that the proposal adheres to the principles of these guidelines, there should be no further need for consultation with emergency response and other public service providers. This is because the guidelines have been written in consultation with emergency response and public service providers and the principles have been designed to ensure that name duplications and boundary confusions are minimised.

In instances of councils not being certain whether or not the naming proposal conforms to the guidelines (for instance, in cases of possible duplication or boundary confusion) they can consult with the OGN and emergency response and public service providers using the online Notification and Editing Service (NES). This consultation should be undertaken prior to any public consultation to ensure that unsuitable proposals are not provided to the public for their feedback.

Details on how the NES system works to facilitate consultation with emergency response and public service providers are available from [www.land.vic.gov.au/nas](http://www.land.vic.gov.au/nas).

#### Step 5 Consult with the public

It is important to ensure that the public including residents, ratepayers and businesses are consulted on any proposals that will affect their addresses.

Consultation with the immediate and/or extended community should only occur after council is certain that the name and boundaries conform to the principles of these guidelines. If councils are uncertain of this, they can contact the OGN for further advice.

Details on the consultation process can be found in Principle 1(M) and online at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines).

#### Step 6 Council consideration of the proposal

When the above steps have been undertaken a report should be prepared on the proposal.

The report must include:

- discussion of how the proposal conforms to principles in Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines; and
- discussion of and response to any objections/comments received during the consultation period(s).

The council decision to accept or reject a proposal needs to be formally recorded. This also applies when the decision has been made under delegated authority.\* In both instances any party who responded to the proposal must be advised of council's decision.

Further details on dealing with objections and notifying objectors if a proposal is accepted and lodged with the Registrar for consideration are provided in Principle 1(N).

### 3.2.3 Lodging a proposal with the Office of Geographic Names (OGN)

Council staff should lodge the proposal with the OGN using the online Notification and Editing Service (NES). This online facility allows for the easy submission and tracking of proposals from the council through to the Registrar and onto the Department of Sustainability and Environment's Spatial Information Infrastructure (SII).

Details on how to register for and use NES are provided at <http://www.land.vic.gov.au/nas>.

When submitting the proposal through NES, councils must attach the following information:

- A letter providing:
  - details of the existing and proposed boundaries for the new locality and existing localities in the area;
  - background of the proposed name and boundaries and why they were selected;
  - indication that the name and boundaries conform to the principles of Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines;
  - details of the consultation process, outcomes and how any objections have been addressed; and
  - notification that the proposal has been accepted by council or is being submitted by a delegated officer.

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\* In some instances, council might prefer to provide a 'delegation of authority' for the naming process to a relevant officer within their organisation. In this case, approval for the name does not need to be granted by the councillors. It is important though that the municipal council forwards details of the delegated authority – on official letterhead signed by the CEO – to the Office of Geographic Names (OGN) for filing and future reference.

- A report including the following information (where relevant):
  - a copy of consent from Indigenous consultative group;
  - details of consultation with emergency response and public service providers (if NES was used for consultation this evidence is automatically attached to the submission to the OGN);
  - copies of survey material;
  - de-identified (i.e. personal details removed) objections received from the public;
  - copies of letters sent to objectors indicating their ability to lodge a further objection to the Registrar (as provided in Principle 1(N)); and
  - a copy of council minutes indicating acceptance of the proposal, or that council staff have delegated authority.

### 3.2.4 Registrar's consideration of the proposal

Upon receiving a proposal to create a new locality, the OGN will upload details of the proposal on the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces). A letter will also be sent to the naming authority advising of the proposal's receipt.

If no objections were lodged during the consultation period the Registrar will proceed to consider the proposal. If the proposal received objections during the consultation period the Registrar will delay consideration of the proposal for a 30-day period following council notification to objectors, as provided in Principle 1(N).

When considering the proposal, the Registrar will check that the new name and boundaries conform to all the principles of the guidelines, in particular that the name is not duplicated and that the creation of the new locality can be considered to be in the long-term interests of the community. If the Registrar deems that the proposal conforms to the guidelines, the Registrar will proceed to gazette the proposal (refer to Section 3.2.8) and update the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces) to reflect this stage in the procedure.

The Registrar might consider the proposal to be of greater than local significance and in this instance it will be referred to a Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee for its advice (refer to Section 1.5(f)). The OGN will update the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces) to reflect this stage in the procedure.

If the Registrar deems that the proposal does not conform to these guidelines, the proposal will be returned to the naming authority with either a request for further information or advice that the proposal be redesigned so that it might be acceptable for future consideration and registration.

The name and boundaries will not be registered or recorded in VICNAMES. The OGN will update the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces) to reflect this stage in the procedure.

### 3.2.5 Gazettal of a proposal

Once a name has been approved by the Registrar for registration, a notice will be published in the *Victoria Government Gazette* notifying registration of the name.

The gazette notice will include:

- the file number;
- the new name;
- the names of the localities within which the new locality is being defined;
- written details of the location of the boundaries;

- the local government area(s) within which the locality is located; and
- a web link to the OGN website where the proposal and map of the locality can be located.

The gazette notice acts as an official notification that the proposal will be registered in VICNAMES.

### 3.2.6 Registration and notification

Once the proposal has been gazetted, the Registrar will enter the details of the new locality into VICNAMES. The gazettal date will be recorded as the official date of registration. Upon registration, the OGN will inform relevant stakeholders as provided in Principle 1(O). The naming authority is also encouraged to inform local stakeholders as provided in Principle 1(O).

## 3.3 Creation of new localities by government departments and authorities

A checklist summarising the key points below, which government departments and authorities can use to prepare a proposal for the Registrar's office, is available at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines).

Government departments and authorities sometimes undertake major land redevelopment projects. If the development is of substantial size or in a prominent position they might consider creating a new locality to define the area. The information provided below should be used by government departments and authorities as a step-by-step guide to creating a new locality.

### 3.3.1 How to initiate a proposal

When generating a proposal the department should have already defined the boundaries for the proposed new locality. The boundaries should conform to the principles outlined in this section and Section 1 of these guidelines. The department or authority can contact the OGN for advice on establishing the boundaries.

Government departments can decide on a name for the new locality through an in-house process or a public naming competition. Both processes are very similar and therefore the processes for both are included below, with occasional references to slight differences in procedure.

#### (a) Developing a name in-house

To help decide on the name through an in-house process, the department should consider using the name of a local historical figure or event, or unique attribute of an event that occurs in the area.

OR

#### (b) Developing a name through a public competition

To develop a name proposal through public competition, the department should contact the OGN to discuss appropriate formats for the competition forum. Essentially, the competition should be advertised broadly with reference made to these guidelines. The information for the competition should clearly define the new locality's proposed boundaries.

### 3.3.2 Formal proposal process

#### Step 1 Apply the principles

Upon selection of a proposed name(s) and boundaries, the department or authority should check that the proposal conforms to all of the principles outlined in Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines.

If the proposal does not comply with the principles, the department or authority is encouraged to contact the OGN for advice. The proposal could be modified for compliance or rejected at this stage.

#### Step 2 Consult with affected municipal council(s)

The department or authority should consult with the municipal council(s) within which the proposed locality will be situated. The council can assist with developing appropriate boundaries, consulting with the community and advising how the proposal will impact upon existing addresses in the area.

#### Step 3 Consult with Indigenous communities

If the proposed name is derived from an Indigenous Australian language, or is a traditional Indigenous name for the feature, from the outset the department or authority should consult with and obtain the input and approval of the relevant local Indigenous group(s). Details on the consultation process are provided in Principle 1(K) and the supplementary document *Consulting with Indigenous Groups* available from [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines).

#### Step 4 Consult with emergency response and other stakeholders

When a department or authority has ensured that the proposal adheres to the principles of these guidelines, there should be no further need for consultation with emergency response and other service providers. This is because the guidelines have been written in consultation with emergency response and other service providers and the principles have been designed to ensure that name duplications and boundary confusions are minimised.

In instances of a department or authority not being certain of whether or not the naming proposal conforms to the guidelines (for instance, in cases of possible duplication or boundary confusion) it can consult with the OGN and emergency response and public service providers using the online Notification and Editing Service (NES). This consultation should be undertaken prior to any public consultation to ensure that unsuitable proposals are not provided to the public for their feedback.

Details on how the NES system works to facilitate consultation with emergency response and public service providers are available from <http://www.land.vic.gov.au/nes>.

#### Step 5 Consult with the public

Although a department or authority that has created a naming proposal in-house does not have to consult with the community, it is recommended that it consults with residents, ratepayers and businesses whose addresses will be affected by the creation of the proposed new locality.

Consultation with the immediate and/or extended community should only occur once the department or authority is certain that the proposed name and its boundaries conform to the principles of these guidelines. If the department or authority is uncertain of this, it can contact the OGN for further advice.

Details on the consultation process can be found in Principle 1(M) and online at <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces>.

### Step 6 Contact the Office of Geographic Names (OGN)

At this stage in the proposal procedure, a government department or authority should contact the OGN to seek one of two things:

- the Registrar's endorsement of the locality's proposed name and boundaries (complete this step and proceed to Section 3.3.3(a)); or
- assistance from a Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee to make a final determination on the proposed locality's name and/or boundaries (complete this step and proceed to Section 3.3.3(b)).

The government department or authority should make contact with the OGN in writing, and include the following information in its submission.

- A brief report providing:
  - details of the proposed boundaries for the new locality and existing localities in the area;
  - background of the proposed name and why it was selected; and
  - indication that the name and boundaries conform to the principles of Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines.
- Details of consultation, including copies of survey material and de-identified (i.e. personal details removed) submissions received from the public. Discussion should include details of how the department or authority has addressed any objections lodged.
- Copies of consent from the Indigenous community(ies), if relevant.
- Details of consultation with emergency response and public service providers, including copies of correspondence sent and responses received, if relevant,.
- An indication of whether the department or authority is seeking endorsement of the proposed name and boundaries, or would prefer for the Registrar to convene a Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee to make a final decision on the proposal.

Upon receiving the proposal, the OGN will upload details on the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces). A letter will also be sent to the department or authority advising of the proposal's receipt.

### 3.3.3 Registrar's consideration of proposals

#### (a) Seeking an endorsement

If the proposed name and boundaries conform to the principles of these guidelines, the Registrar will endorse the proposal and provide written evidence of this to the department.

The OGN will update the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces) to reflect this stage in the procedure.

If the name and boundaries do not conform to the guidelines the Registrar will advise on how to amend the proposal. The government department or authority can then amend the proposal and resubmit it to the Registrar for endorsement.

The government department or authority can use the Registrar's endorsement to seek approval from its Minister for the naming proposal. If the Minister approves the proposal, the department or authority should then provide copies of this approval to the Registrar, who will then proceed to gazette and register the new locality using the processes outlined in Sections 3.3.4 and 3.3.5 of these guidelines.

OR

### **(b) Seeking referral to a committee**

If the department's or authority's proposal is seeking the assistance of a Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee to make a final naming determination, the Registrar will convene a committee based on the provisions of s. 12 to s. 16 of the Act.

The OGN will update the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces) to reflect this stage in the procedure.

The committee will be convened at its members' earliest possible convenience, and its procedure should follow Section 1 of these guidelines. Further details on Geographic Place Names Advisory Committees and their procedures are available at Section 1.5(f).

### **3.3.4 Gazettal of a proposal**

Once the new locality's creation has been approved by the Registrar for registration, a notice of registration will be published in the *Victoria Government Gazette*.

The gazette notice will include:

- the file number;
- the new name;
- the names of the localities within which the new locality is being defined;
- written details of the location's boundaries;
- the local government area(s) in which the locality is located; and
- a web link to the DSE Naming Places website where the locality's proposal and map can be located.

The gazette notice acts as an official notification that the proposal will be registered in VICNAMES.

### **3.3.5 Registration and notification**

Once the proposal has been gazetted, the Registrar will enter the details of the new locality into VICNAMES. The gazettal date will be recorded as the official date of registration.

Upon registration, the OGN will inform relevant stakeholders as provided in Principle 1(O). The department is also encouraged to inform local stakeholders as provided in Principle 1(O).

## **3.4 Alterations or changes to existing locality name(s) or boundaries**

A checklist summarising the key points below, which municipal councils can use to prepare a proposal for the Registrar's office, is available at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines).

As populations grow there is a need to ensure that the names and boundaries of localities reflect their communities' needs. In some instances, a locality boundary might be considered for alteration based on changes in the distribution of homes or businesses in the area, or other demographic changes.

The following section of these guidelines contains a step-by-step guide to the implementation process for altering a locality name or boundary if that locality falls within one or more municipal areas.

### 3.4.1 Initiating a proposal

#### **General public**

Members of the general public can submit a proposal to change the name or boundaries of a locality to the municipal council(s) responsible for the area in/across which the locality is located. Proposals should include:

- background detail on why the council(s) should consider changing the name and/or boundaries;
- the proposed new locality name and/or boundaries;
- details on why the new name and/or boundaries is/are considered to be appropriate;
- contact details of the proposer(s) and information on public consultation that has occurred and/or support that has been gathered from members or groups of the community; and
- an indication that the proposed name and boundaries conform to the principles outlined in Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines.

Upon receiving the proposal from the public, the responsible staff member(s) of the council(s) should initiate the formal proposal process detailed in Section 3.4.2 of these guidelines. If a proposal is to change the boundary that lies across two or more municipal areas, the staff of the respective councils need to coordinate the proposal's processing.

#### **Emergency response or other public service providers**

Staff of organisations that deal with the provision of emergency or other services (such as postal or telecommunications) can submit a suggestion or proposal to change the name or boundaries of a locality to the municipal council(s) responsible for the area in/across which the locality is located.

The provider may only submit a name and/or boundary change proposal if it can be demonstrated to be in the long-term interests of the public. Proposals should include:

- background detail on why the council(s) should consider changing the name and/or boundaries;
- the locality's suggested new name and/or boundaries;
- details on why the new name and/or boundaries is/are considered to be appropriate; and
- an indication that the proposed name and boundaries conform to the principles outlined in Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines.

Upon receiving the proposal from the emergency or other service provider, the responsible staff member(s) of the council(s) should initiate the formal proposal process detailed in Section 3.4.2 of these guidelines.

If a proposal is to create a locality located across two or more municipal areas, the staff of the respective councils need to coordinate the proposal's processing.

If a request is made in the interests of public safety, the municipal council must respond and action the request within 30 days.

#### **Municipal councils**

Councils can generate a proposal in-house to rename or alter the boundaries of a locality. The renaming or alteration of the boundaries should only be considered if the council can demonstrate that the proposal is being made in the long-term interests of the community.

If the council is seeking to develop a naming or renaming proposal that uses an Indigenous name(s), contact should be made with relevant Indigenous communities to seek their input at the outset of the proposal development process.

Information on this consultation process is available from Principle 1(K) and the supplementary document *Consulting with Indigenous Groups* available from [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines).

Once a name and boundaries have been selected, councils should initiate the formal proposal process detailed in Section 3.4.2 of these guidelines.

### 3.4.2 Formal proposal process

#### Step 1 Check information

Check all necessary information has been provided by the party proposing the name. If insufficient, request additional information within 30 days.

#### Step 2 Apply the principles

Upon selection of a new name and/or boundaries, municipal councils should check that the proposal conforms to all of the principles outlined in Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines. If the proposal does not comply with the principles, or council determines that the proposal is frivolous in nature, council is encouraged to contact the OGN for advice. The proposal could be modified for compliance or rejected at this stage

#### Step 3 Consult with Indigenous communities

If the proposed new name is derived from an Indigenous Australian language, or is a traditional Indigenous name for the feature, from the outset the municipal council should consult with and obtain the input and approval of the relevant local Indigenous group(s). Details on the consultation process are provided in Principle 1(K) and the supplementary document *Consulting with Indigenous Groups* available from [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingguidelines).

#### Step 4 Consult with emergency response and other stakeholders

When councils have ensured that the proposal adheres to the principles of these guidelines, there should be no further need for consultation with emergency response and other service providers. This is because the guidelines have been written in consultation with emergency response and public service providers and the principles have been designed to ensure that name duplications and boundary confusions are minimised.

In instances where councils are not certain whether the naming and/or boundary change proposal conforms to the guidelines (for instance, in cases of possible duplication or boundary confusion) they can consult with the OGN and emergency response and public service providers using the online Notification and Editing Service (NES). This consultation should be undertaken prior to any public consultation to ensure that unsuitable proposals are not provided to the public for their feedback.

Details on how the NES system works to facilitate consultation with emergency response and public service providers are available at <http://www.land.vic.gov.au/nas>.

#### Step 5 Consult with the public

It is important to ensure that the public (including residents, ratepayers and businesses) are consulted on any proposals that will affect their addresses.

Consultation with the immediate and/or extended community should only occur once council is certain that the new name and/or boundaries conform to the principles of these guidelines. If councils are uncertain of this, they can contact the OGN for further advice. Details on the consultation process can be found in Principle 1(M) and online at <http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces>.

### Step 6 Council consideration of proposal

Once the above steps have been undertaken a report must be prepared on the proposal. The report must include:

- discussion of how the proposal conforms to principles in Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines; and
- discussion of and response to any objections/comments received during the consultation period(s).

The council decision to accept or reject a proposal needs to be formally recorded. This also applies when the decision has been made under delegated authority.<sup>†</sup> In both instances any party who responded to the proposal must be advised of council's decision. Further details on dealing with objections and notifying objectors if a proposal is accepted and lodged with the Registrar for consideration are provided in Principle 1(N).

### 3.4.3 Lodging a proposal with the Office of Geographic Names (OGN)

Council staff should lodge the proposal with the OGN using the online Notification and Editing Service (NES). This online facility allows for the easy submission and tracking of proposals from the council through to the Registrar and onto the Department of Sustainability and Environment's Spatial Information Infrastructure (SII) office.

Details on how to register for and use NES are provided at <http://www.land.vic.gov.au/nas>.

When submitting the proposal through NES, councils must attach the following information:

- A letter providing:
  - details of the existing and proposed boundaries for the locality and other affected localities;
  - background of the proposed name and/or boundaries and why they were selected (where relevant);
  - indication that the name and boundaries conform to the principles of Sections 1 and 3 of these guidelines;
  - details of the consultation process, outcomes and how any objections have been addressed; and
  - notification that the proposal has been accepted by council or is being submitted by a delegated officer.
- A report including the following information (where relevant):
  - a copy of consent from Indigenous consultative group(s);
  - details of consultation with emergency response and public service providers (if NES was used for consultation this evidence is automatically attached to the submission to the OGN);
  - copies of survey material;
  - de-identified (i.e. personal details removed) objections received from the public;
  - copies of letters sent to objectors indicating their ability to lodge a further objection to the Registrar (as provided in Principle 1(N)); and
  - a copy of council minutes indicating acceptance of the proposal, or that council staff have delegated authority.

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<sup>†</sup> In some instances, council might prefer to provide a 'delegation of authority' for the naming process to a relevant officer within their organisation. In this case, approval for the name does not need to be granted by the councillors. It is important though that the municipal council forwards details of the delegated authority – on official letterhead signed by the CEO – to the Office of Geographic Names (OGN) for filing and future reference.

#### **3.4.4 Registrar's consideration of proposal**

Upon receiving a proposal to alter the name and/or boundaries of a locality, the OGN will upload details of the proposal on the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces). A letter will also be sent to the naming authority advising receipt of the proposal.

If the naming authority indicates that the proposal received objections during the consultation period, the Registrar will not consider the proposal for approval until 30 days have elapsed since council approved the proposal and notified objectors. This 30-day delay is to allow time for objectors to lodge further objections as provided in Principle 1(N).

When considering the proposal, the Registrar will check that the proposed new name and/or boundaries conform to all the principles of the guidelines, in particular that the new name is not duplicated and/or that the alteration of the boundaries can be considered to be in the long-term interests of the community.

If the Registrar deems that the proposal conforms to the guidelines the OGN will proceed to gazette the proposal (refer to Section 3.4.5 of these guidelines) and update the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces) to reflect this stage in the procedure.

The Registrar might consider the proposed locality changes to be of greater than local significance and in this instance the proposal will be referred to a Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee for its advice. The OGN will update the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces) to reflect this stage in the procedure.

Further details on Geographic Place Names Advisory Committees are available in Section 1.5(f) of these guidelines.

If the Registrar deems that the new name and/or boundaries proposal does not conform to these guidelines, the proposal will be returned to the naming authority with either a request for further information or advice that the proposal be redesigned so that it might be acceptable for future consideration and registration.

The new name and/or boundaries will not be registered or recorded in VICNAMES. The OGN will update the Proposals webpage at [www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces](http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/namingplaces) to reflect this stage in the procedure.

#### **3.4.5 Gazettal of a proposal**

Once a new name and/or boundaries have been approved by the Registrar for registration, a notice will be published in the *Victoria Government Gazette* notifying of the registration of the altered locality details.

The gazette notice will include:

- the file number;
- the pre-existing names of the affected localities;
- the new names of the affected localities (if relevant);
- written details of the location of the new boundaries (if relevant);
- the local government area(s) in which the affected localities are situated; and
- a web link to the OGN website where the proposal and map of the locality boundaries can be located.

The gazette notice acts as an official notification that the proposal will be registered in VICNAMES.

### **3.4.6 Registration and notification**

Once the proposal has been gazetted, the Registrar will enter the details of the new locality name and/or boundaries into VICNAMES. The gazettal date will be recorded as the official date of registration.

Upon registration, the OGN will inform relevant stakeholders as outlined in Principle 1(O). The naming authority is also encouraged to inform local stakeholders as outlined in Principle 1(O).