

# Policy

## Aboriginal Signage

Responsible Manager (Title)	Manager Open Spaces and Facilities		
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Document(s) this policy Supersedes	V4.0 – 18/09/2018 – 15.149/18		
Community Plan Linkage	<b>Society - A community that supports, encourages and celebrates the rich cultural heritage of the Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl people and provides space for active community participation and strong relationships with local Traditional Owners</b>		

### 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the development of Aboriginal signage.

### 2 Definitions

**Council:** Clarence Valley Council

**Elder(s):** A First Nation Australian who has gained recognition as a custodian of knowledge and lore, and who has permission to disclose cultural knowledge and beliefs.

**Traditional Owner(s):** A First Nation Australian person or group of First Nation Australians directly descended from the original inhabitants of a culturally defined area of land or country.

**Local Aboriginal Land Council:** A constituted body under the *Aboriginal Lands Rights Act 1983*.

**Aboriginal Signage:** Dual naming signage which may include traditional owner names of places or country, symbols, motifs or the like.

### 3 Background/legislative requirements

Since June 2001, the NSW government has supported a dual naming policy for geographical features and cultural sites. This policy aims to give prominence to Traditional Owner place names alongside European counterparts.

In NSW, the Geographical Names Board (GNB) is the authority for naming features such as mountains, bays and rivers along with suburbs, railway stations and other places and sites. Whereas Council is the authority for naming infrastructure such as bridges and roads under Council's control as the Local Roads Authority.

When the GNB assigns a name, it becomes the officially recognised place name. This means the name is published on maps and made available for the community to use.

## 4 Policy statement

The dual naming of existing town and place names with Aboriginal signage will:

- Deliver an opportunity for the presentation of Traditional Owners social and cultural heritage meanings to the wider community
- Create a sense-of-place, respect and opportunity for the First Nation Australians community
- Improve cultural understanding

When a request to implement an Aboriginal signage is received, Council will seek the assistance of the Traditional Owners (and if this group is not identifiable, the Local Aboriginal Land Council) relevant to the geographic location of the sign to consult with the broader First Nation Australian community and ensure consensus. In instances where a geographical feature crosses a boundary or boundaries, all relevant Traditional Owners and/or Local Aboriginal Land Council's will be informed and/or consulted as appropriate.

## 5 Procedures

### 5.1 Initial proposal

Prospective applicants are encouraged to read the GNB's [Aboriginal Place Naming Factsheet](#) before making an application.

All requests for Aboriginal signage should be made to Council in the first instance.

Council will assess the request and liaise with the relevant Traditional Owners Registered Native Title Body Corporate or Local Aboriginal Land Council as appropriate.

If supported, the proponent will be encouraged to submit their application online via the [GNB's NSW Place Naming Proposal System](#).

### 5.2 Application process

Applications submitted online via the [GNB's NSW Place Naming Proposal System](#) will processed as follows:

- The Application will be assessed by the GNB for compliance with their Place Naming Policy
- The Application will then be sent to Council for endorsement.
  - The application will be reported at a meeting of Council for approval in principle
  - If approved in principle by Council, the GNB will be advised to proceed with determining the Application
  - If not supported by Council, the GNB will be advised accordingly
- The GNB, will advertise the proposal in the local press, for public comment.

- Submissions may be made to the GNB, (the GNB may seek comment from Council on those submissions)
- The GNB will determine the application and, if approved, will publish the approved name in the Government Gazette
- After publication in the gazette Council will make preparations to have the signage made.
- If Council is advised that the application was not approved, Council will take no further action on the proposal.

### 5.3 Specifications

All Aboriginal signage shall:

- Be erected and located under the direction of Clarence Valley Council Civil Works team and in accordance with any signposting guidelines
- Not obstruct the passage, line of sight or create a hazard for vehicles or pedestrians
- Not significantly obstruct or impede all or part of a view of a river, the sea or other place or feature in which in Council's opinion is of significance.

The development and translation of First Nation Australians place names is the responsibility of the Traditional Owners of the land where the sign is to be located. If the Traditional Owners are not identifiable, then the Local Elders along with the Local Aboriginal Land Council will be required to consult with linguistic experts.

Collaboration in relation to Aboriginal signage, between Council and the Traditional Owners/First Nation Australian community will be an on-going and two-way basis.

Copyright will always remain the Intellectual Property of the traditional owners. *The Copyright Act 1968 (C'th)* (section 65) allows for the making of reproductions (such as photographs, films and paintings) of works that are permanently situated in a public place as long as it is not for commercial purposes.

Technical knowledge, expertise and legislative requirements regarding Aboriginal signage construction and location are the responsibility of Council.

### 5.4 Maintenance

Ongoing maintenance of approved Aboriginal signage will be the responsibility of Council.

## 6 References

FATSIL Guide to Community Protocols for Indigenous Language Projects (2004)

*Copyright Act 1968 (C'th)*

Geographical Names Board of NSW Guidelines for the determination of place names (September 2018)

Geographical Names Board of NSW Policy, Place Naming (July 2019).