
Open Space Naming Policy
Kaupapa Whakaingoa Whenua
Māhorahora



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1 INTRODUCTION

Wellington has a number and variety of open spaces which includes parks and reserves, sportsfields and play areas. These open spaces are named to reflect the identity of the city and/or the local area and to ensure ease of identification for Council and the public.

While there are no requirements or other provisions in either the Reserves Act or Local Government Act covering the naming of open spaces, Wellington City Council has had a Parks and Reserves Naming Policy since 1994.

The 1994 policy has been updated by providing a clearer process and by taking into account Council's obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi and the importance of the Memoranda of Understanding with our Treaty partners Wellington Tenth's Trust and Te Runanga o Toa Rangatira. As the Open Space Strategy (1998) states: "Nowhere is this more important than in the development of open space policy where Maori interests are to maintain and restore the mauri or life essence of the whenua (land), water and air".

The policy contains:

- Part A* - Decision making framework which entails a number of steps or key stages
- Part B* - Style guide to ensure consistency in naming
- Part C* - Selection criteria to establish relative merits of potential open space names (note this section only relates to specific steps within the decision making framework).

2 WHAT DOES THIS POLICY AIM TO ACHIEVE?

The aim of this policy is to provide a clear process for determining appropriate names for new open spaces.

3 WHAT IS THE SCOPE OF THE POLICY?

This policy covers Council owned open space. "Open spaces are generally the outdoor places in the city which have ecological, recreational, landscape or heritage values." (*Capital Spaces: Open Space Strategy for Wellington Te Whanganui-a-tara*, 1998, p8). For the purposes of this policy open space includes parks, reserves, sportsfields, play areas and any other clearly definable open spaces including areas within the Town Belt and Outer Green Belt.

This policy applies to new or un-named¹ open spaces. The policy will not be used to rename already gazetted or Council approved names. Where existing Council owned land is not named, Council will apply this policy and associated framework.

Council usually obtains open space in the following ways:

- Subdivision;

¹ This includes open spaces with existing names which do not have official recognition

- Purchased by Council;
- Transferred from another use, for example from landfill to recreation use;
- Vested in Council by another agency; or
- Gifted to Council.

This policy applies to all the above cases, however special conditions may apply (refer to section 5).

4 HOW WILL THE POLICY WORK?

When a new or unnamed open space has been identified, Council will, in the first instance discuss with iwi whether the site is of significance. If it is, an appropriate name will be determined in conjunction with iwi. Joint naming will also be negotiated with iwi if Council consider this an option.

If the new open space holds little or no significance for iwi or if iwi will consider the possibility of joint naming then the framework provides a process to be able to recommend an appropriate name to Council for consideration.

All names should have formal approval by resolution of the Council. Once approved by Council, the name will remain in perpetuity. Council will not consider renaming already approved names for open spaces. This will ensure that the title is officially recognised and will guard against future debate, criticism and claims for name change.

The trigger for the application of the framework will be when a new open space has been identified or Council receives land through one of the cases listed in section 3.

Once a name has been approved by Council, appropriate signage will be implemented in the open space.

5 SPECIAL CONDITIONS

There are two areas where special conditions may apply.

5.1 Gifts

If the open space has been donated to Council then this policy will apply. However, the name of the donor should be recognised on open space signage and in any written material concerning the open space for example “bequested by”.

5.2 Sponsorship

Both sports and facilities can benefit from sponsorship arrangements. Therefore commercial involvement in name association may be encouraged in certain circumstances. If a sponsorship arrangement is entered into which relates to a particular open space the decision making framework will still apply. However the name of the sponsor/s should be recognised on open space signage and in any written material concerning the open space for the period of the sponsorship.

PART A: DECISION MAKING FRAMEWORK

The following process describes the decision making framework outlined in Diagram 1 for the naming of open spaces. This framework is accompanied by a style guide (Part B) and a set of selection criteria (Part C).

Step 1 Iwi Significance

Determine if the open space (or surrounding area) is of significance to iwi.

Under the Memoranda of Understanding with mana whenua, Council will seek input from the Wellington Tenth Trust and Te Runanga o Toa Rangatira Inc on the significance of the specific open space to iwi. Written justification of significance will be required.

Step 2 Maori name identified

Iwi supply relevant Maori name.
Council identifies the potential for joint naming.

If there is no potential for a joint name the Maori name is assessed against the style guide and put forward to Council for their consideration (Step 6).

If Council identifies a specific and relevant joint name, both names are assessed against the style guide and put forward to Council for approval.

If there is no specific joint name identified then step 3 needs to be undertaken.

Step 3 Suggested names (if step 1 does not apply)

Determine if there are names in common usage.

'Common usage' is defined as:

- name used by more than one community of interest (for example community groups, schools, businesses); and
- name referred to in local documentation (for example local newsletters)

Determine if any names have already been suggested.

Seek additional suggestions through targeted consultation, having regard to Council's Consultation Policy, with:

- Local historians
- Local community groups
- Community Boards (Makara/Ohariu and Tawa) in their respective areas
- Developer where appropriate

Step 4 Assessment

Determine the appropriateness of the names suggested in Step 3 against the style guide (Part B).

Develop a preferred name ranking using the selection criteria (Part C).

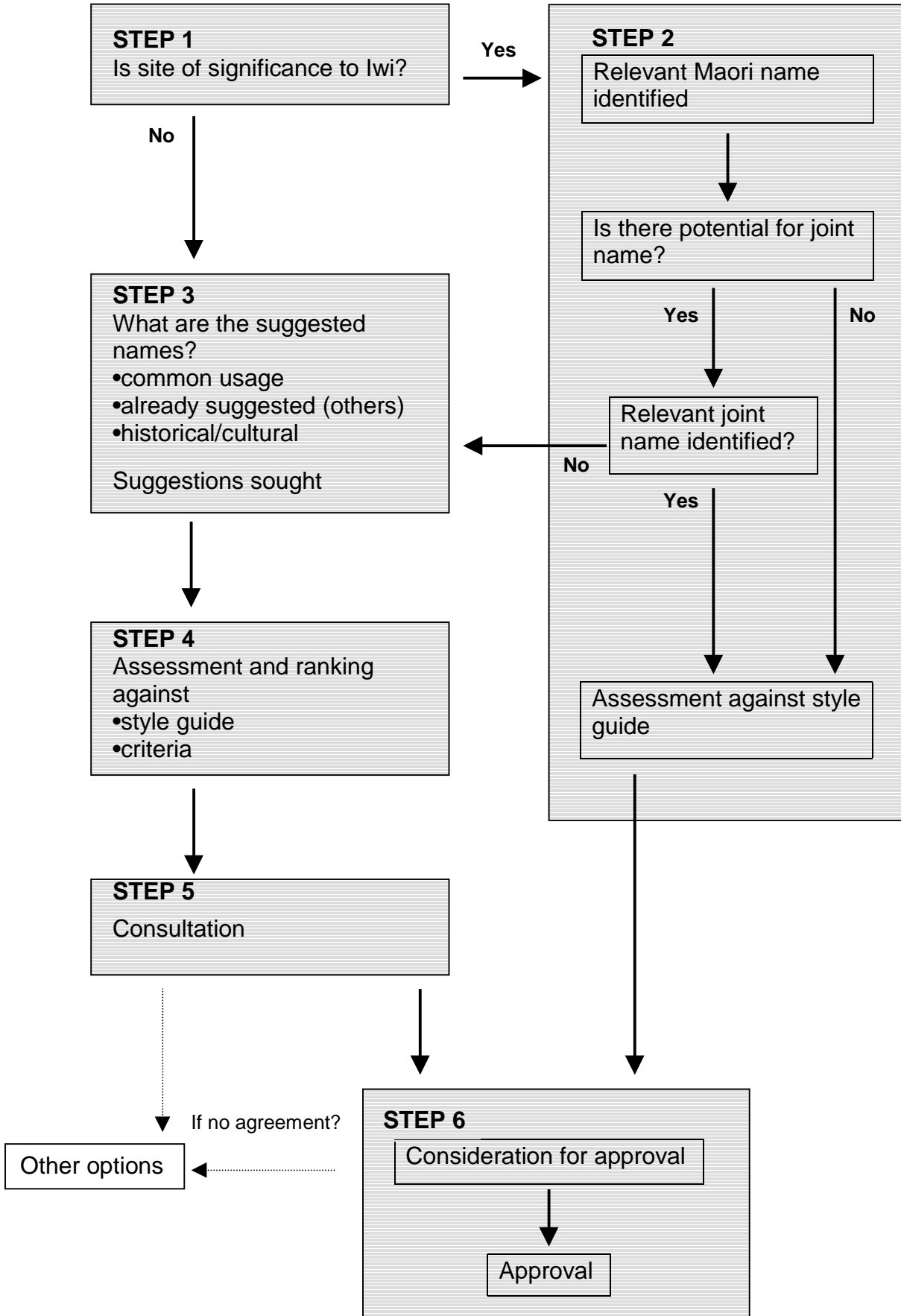
Step 5 Consultation

Consultation will be undertaken using Council's Consultation Policy on the preferred ranked names.

Step 6 Consideration for approval

Following consultation a recommended name will be put to Council for consideration. If there has been no agreement on a preferred name through the consultation process then other options for resolving the issue may need to be developed.

DIAGRAM 1: DECISION MAKING FRAMEWORK



PART B: STYLE GUIDE

The style guide is a list of “rules” that any open space name needs to abide by. Use of the style guide will ensure consistency of naming. Any name suggested under either Step 2 or Step 3 of the framework needs to be assessed against the style guide.

1. Duplication of names should be avoided.
2. Possessive form (for example John Smith’s reserve) should be avoided except if it destroys the sound of the name or changes its descriptive application. If used the apostrophe should be dropped.
3. In general hyphens should be avoided. Preferably, the name should be written either as one word or as separate words.
4. Words should be spelt correctly, including the use of diacritical marks such as macrons as appropriate.
5. Names which would be considered in poor taste or likely to cause offence should be not be used.
6. Established geographical names should not be altered unless for reasons such as to avoid confusion, ambiguity or to standardise spelling.
7. Where an incorrect name has become established by local usage the Council may in its discretion retain such incorrect form.

PART C: SELECTION CRITERIA

These criteria will be used to establish the relative merits of any suggested names. All names that are suggested through Step 3 of the framework will be compared using the criteria which has been weighted to reflect relative importance (see Table 1). The names will then be ranked in order of merit with the highest scored name highest ranked.

1. Local Usage

Proof of establishment and the extent of common usage need to be determined at Step 3 of the framework.

2. Historical Person or Event

This can be for example settlers, early notable people or events with local association. Naming after persons living or recently deceased should generally be avoided where the issue is potentially sensitive.

3. Significant geographical feature, landscape, flora or fauna

Naming after minor features should be avoided.

4. Personal name (surname) for special service

This can be for conservation, sport, community service or other sphere of activity with local association which can be duly recognised. Naming after persons living or recently deceased should generally be avoided where the issue is potentially sensitive.

5. Descriptive name

For example Hill Park (as in on a hill). Naming after minor features should be avoided.

6. Associated name

That is a part of an association or grouping of names in a suburb.

7. Published name in any work

The work needs to be authoritative in the opinion of Council. However publishing will not confer establishment.

8. Cultural Significance other than Maori

Significance to be determined through written evidence.

9. Adjacent street or name of suburb

NOTE: Naming of an open space will not preclude naming significant features within it for example a fountain, artwork or memorial.

TABLE 1: WEIGHTED SELECTION CRITERIA

Criterion	Weighting
1. Local Usage	High 3
2. Historical Person or Event *	Medium 2
3. Significant feature	Medium 2
4. Personal name (surname) for special service *	Low 1
5. Descriptive name	Low 1
6. Associated name	High 3
7. Published name in any work	Low 1
8. Cultural Significance	High 3
9. Adjacent Street/suburb	Low 1
Score	

*Note that for each of these criteria there may be more than one name suggested. If so the officer responsible will need to make an assessment on the relative merits of each name under the same criterion with regard to the following:

- extent of local knowledge about person or event
- contribution to area of interest