

Determining suburbs and localities in NSW

The Geographical Names Board (GNB) has a statutory responsibility to determine definitive boundaries for suburbs and localities throughout New South Wales.

The GNB works closely with local councils when defining boundaries because local residents are one of the most significant users of the names.

The process of determining boundaries is one of acknowledging existing names and formalising their extent according to common local usage.

Defining an address locality

An address locality is a division of the landscape that has defined limits—a suburb in urban areas or a locality in rural areas. It is the legal name that is used as the last line of address with the postcode.

Guidelines for determining address localities

The GNB has developed the following guidelines for the establishment of address localities within NSW.

- Does the proposed address locality represent a new community?
- Does it have a unique character compared to surrounding areas?
- Is there a significant change of land use?
- Is it isolated physically from the surrounding suburbs or localities?
- What is the vehicular and pedestrian access?
- There must be community acceptance by the residents and from the surrounding area as well as agreement by local council.
- The name should comply with the GNB’s naming guidelines.

Process outlined

The process for determining address localities is outlined in the *Geographical Names Act 1966*. The key points of this procedure are:

1. Anyone can place a proposal to the GNB to create or amend an address locality. However, the GNB requires that the local council must concur with the proposal.
2. The GNB recommends that the local council ensures wide community support through public consultation prior to its concurrence.
3. The proposal is then submitted to the GNB. It should include a map showing the proposed boundaries and supporting documentation addressing compliance with the GNB’s guidelines.
4. The GNB will then consider the proposal. If approved, it will advertise the proposal in a local newspaper and the NSW Government Gazette (the Gazette) and will also provide maps for public exhibition.
5. The community will have one month to comment on the proposal. If no objections are received, the address locality will be formalised by way of notice in the Gazette and the local council will be notified.
6. If objections are received, the local council is asked to provide feedback. The GNB will either re-advertise the proposal, abandon the proposal or make a recommendation to the Minister for Lands for final determination.
7. Councils can then implement boundaries and names on signposts, rates database etc. It is also a good idea for the council to prepare an item for the local media confirming the determination of the names and boundaries.

Cultural designations

The following categories of names can be used in conjunction with address localities.

- City.
- Town.
- Village.
- Urban place.
- Rural place.
- Historic area.
- Historic site.

It is important to note that these features are unbounded and are represented as points only. As such they cannot be used as the legal name that is used in the last line of the address with the postcode. Furthermore, the GNB allows a name to be designated as both an address locality and a cultural designation (e.g. Bathurst can be both a suburb and a city, Adelong can be both a locality and a town and Cudgen can be both a locality and a village).

Legislation

- *The Geographical Names Act 1966*

For further advice or assistance

For further advice or assistance on determining suburbs and localities in NSW contact the GNB.

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