

Plaques and Memorials Policy

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1. Purpose

The Policy provides a clear and equitable framework for the management of new and existing plaques and memorials, including the assessment of community requests and the installation and ongoing maintenance of plaques and memorials.

2. Statement

The Policy intent is to:

- a. Support recognition of significant historical events and persons or organisations closely associated with the leadership, cultural and social development of the city.
- b. Protect the intended purpose, environmental, and aesthetic appearance of public open space.
- c. Ensure that recognition through plaques and memorials occurs only for current and past residents of the Shoalhaven.
- d. Manage risks in relation to plaques and memorials.
- e. Ensure future operational maintenance and expenses are accommodated.

There are existing plaques or memorials in the Shoalhaven that predate this Policy. The presence of an existing plaque or memorial should not be taken as a precedent for the approval of any future plaques or memorials.

2.1 Scope of Policy

The Policy applies to all plaques and memorials situated on Council owned or managed land including stand-alone or mounted infrastructure and memorial gardens.

The Policy does not apply to cemeteries and crematoriums, official commemorative plaques installed on Council buildings or other infrastructure, or signage including interpretive (educational), directional or regulatory signs.

2.2 Background

Public open space is a significant part of the Shoalhaven's social and cultural heritage, contributing highly valued recreational, environmental, and aesthetic spaces for people who live, work, and visit the local government area. Plaques and memorials provide recognition and can contribute to an understanding of events or individuals closely associated with the history or communities of the Shoalhaven.

Decisions regarding plaques and memorials will consider the balance between the desire to appropriately commemorate events or individuals and the ongoing enjoyment of visually uncluttered public spaces.

2.3 Definitions

For this Policy, the following definitions apply:

2.3.1. Plaque

A flat tablet of metal, stone, engraved pavers (footpath) or other material which may include text and/or images that commemorate a person or historical information relevant to a particular location. The plaque may be fixed to an object, building or hard ground surface located within public open space.

2.3.2. Memorial

An object (e.g., obelisk) established to commemorate a person, group, or event. In the context of this Policy, memorial may not include a tree, but may include a memorial garden if approved for a major public open space.

2.3.3. Public Open Space

Is all public land (owned or managed by Council) that is open or accessible to the community.

This includes:

- a. Parks and reserves, bushland reserves, public hall/community centre gardens, showgrounds, and sportsgrounds
- b. Reserve furniture within public space (such as benches and picnic tables)
- c. Any other infrastructure within public space (such as picnic shelters, barbeques, playgrounds, fences, and paths)
- d. Activity centre locations, including footpaths, median strips, public squares, malls, and laneways

3. Provisions

3.1 Guidelines

3.1.1. To protect the intended purpose and aesthetic appearance of public spaces, Council does not generally encourage installation of plaques and memorials on land owned or managed by Council.

3.1.2. Plaques and memorials will only be considered where they are consistent with Council's strategic and urban design planning for the proposed location. The proposal must be consistent with relevant legislation, Council strategies and plans, the land's public purpose, and must not result in a change of use of the land.

3.1.3. The siting or appearance of a plaque or memorial must not negatively impact the aesthetic, social, cultural, or environmental uses or values of public space. It should be respectful of and in harmony with its surroundings.

3.1.4. Plaques and memorials will meet all relevant planning and building requirements. They will be designed and sited in a way that does not damage the supporting structure or natural environment or create a public risk.

3.1.5. Plaques and memorials will be constructed in a manner that requires minimal ongoing maintenance and must be resistant to vandalism. Plaques attached to infrastructure must be durable and should have a life equivalent to the asset to which they are attached.

3.1.6. All costs associated with the design, construction and installation of plaques or memorials are to be paid by the person making the request for the plaque or memorial.

3.1.7. Once approved, installation of any plaque or memorial must be undertaken by Council (at the applicant's cost). Installed plaques and memorials will become the property of Shoalhaven City Council and will be entered into Council's Asset Register.

3.1.8. Maintenance of plaques and memorials must be undertaken by Council.

3.1.9. Council does not guarantee to retain plaques and memorials in perpetuity. A plaque or memorial will be retained in place for as long as practicable, with the following exceptions:

- a. the area in which the item is sited is to be redeveloped
- b. ongoing maintenance costs are prohibitive
- c. in the case of a plaque, the asset to which it is attached has reached the end of its useful life
- d. the condition of the plaque or memorial is poor
- e. the plaque or memorial was not approved by Council

3.1.10. If a plaque or memorial is removed for any of the reasons above, Council will not guarantee replacement of the plaque or memorial, however replacement plaques or memorials of similar form may be considered. All reasonable efforts will be made to identify and advise relevant stakeholders (including family members).

3.1.11. Non-compliant / unauthorised plaques and memorials will be removed by Council as soon as practicable. Where possible, Council will attempt contact with the next of kin/family to return the non-compliant/unauthorised plaque or memorial.

3.2 Criteria for New Plaques and Memorials

3.2.1. Eligible plaques and memorials may commemorate:

- a. Individuals who have made a substantial contribution to the leadership, cultural, environmental, and social aspects of the City's development or shared community history. Importantly, the contribution of the individual must have been exceptional and extend beyond what might be expected through paid employment or voluntary contribution to the community. Individuals must be current or past residents of the Shoalhaven.
- b. A Shoalhaven group or association which has made a substantial and outstanding contribution to the Shoalhaven community
- c. A significant historical or cultural event which has a deep meaning for the broader Shoalhaven community or is of national or state significance

- d. Significant donations for public space infrastructure (e.g., barbecues, picnic shelters etc.)
- e. Funding contributions by external agencies, such as the State or Federal Government. The layout and wording of the plaque will be in accordance with the funding agreement.
- f. A plaque or memorial for the opening of a new or refurbished Council building or facility. Where this is initiated by Council a Report to Council is not required.

3.2.2. The subject of a requested plaque or memorial must have a clear association with and strong relevance to the location proposed for the plaque or memorial and must not be already commemorated elsewhere in the city.

3.2.3. Plaques and memorials commemorating deceased persons will not generally be considered until the person has been deceased for at least one year to allow for appropriate development of historical perspective. Approval will be sought from a deceased person's next of kin or appropriate relative/s where practicable. In exceptional circumstances Council may approve plaques or memorials commemorating significant living persons at Council's discretion.

3.2.4. Memorial Gardens must be requested by Community Consultative Bodies.

3.3 Criteria for Plaques for the Memorial Obelisk at the Ulladulla Civic Centre

Council will consider requests for new plaques at the Frontline Services Memorial Obelisk at the Ulladulla Civic Centre for frontline services personnel who lost their lives from August 2018 onwards. This approval process must be used by those who wish to nominate a name for inclusion of a plaque on the obelisk. Requests will be considered for:

3.3.1. Frontline services personnel paid or volunteer, who have died whilst protecting the community during disasters / emergencies.

3.3.2. Including but not limited to the Rural Fire Service (RFS), Pilots during fire water bombing, Police, State Emergency Services (SES), Ambulance, Marine Rescue, and Surf Lifesaving NSW.

3.3.3. Those from the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA) who have gone to other communities to assist during disasters / emergencies.

3.3.4. Those from outside the Shoalhaven LGA who have come into the above area to assist with disasters / emergencies.

3.3.5. Names will only be considered for inclusion from those frontline services personnel who lost their lives from August 2018.

3.4 Criteria for Memorial Gardens

Applications will be considered on request from Community Consultative Bodies to establish memorial gardens.

4. Implementation

Placement of plaques or memorials in public open space requires prior written approval from Council.

4.1 New Plaques and Memorials

4.1.1. Applications for new plaques and memorials must be in writing and must demonstrate compliance with the Policy. Applications should include all relevant details including proposed text or images as well as the preferred location for the plaque or memorial.

4.1.2. Initial request must be forwarded by email to council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

4.1.3. Initial review of the application will be made by Council Officers in accordance with the Policy and in liaison with the applicant.

4.1.4. The proposed design and layout, wording and location shall be submitted to the relevant Asset Custodian for Department Manager's approval.

4.1.5. Approval for the design and layout, wording and location of any proposed plaque or memorial rests with the Manager, Community Planning and Projects Department.

4.1.6. A Council resolution will be required to approve the installation of a plaque or memorial.

4.1.7. Once approved, the design, manufacture and installation will be coordinated by Shoalhaven City Council and all costs will be borne by the applicant. In some instances, and at its sole discretion, Council may contribute toward the cost of the manufacture and/or installation.

4.1.8. Any request for the placement of a plaque or memorial within public space that is managed but not owned by Council will initially be assessed by Council. If eligible under the Policy, the request will be referred to the landowner for approval.

4.1.9. Council may consult, collaborate, and seek approvals as required from other organisations and authorities.

4.2 New Plaques for the Memorial Obelisk at the Ulladulla Civic Centre

New plaques will be considered in accordance with the Memorial Obelisk – Ulladulla Civic Centre – New Plaques Procedure (PRD20/171):

4.2.1. Written requests should be forwarded by email to council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au with LEMO in the subject heading.

4.2.2. Council's Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO) will present requests to the Local Emergency Management Committee for discussion and approval.

4.2.3. Library Services Manager will organise purchase and installation of the plaque.

4.3 Requests for Memorial Gardens

Applications will be considered from Community Consultative Bodies to establish memorial gardens.

4.3.1. Initial request must be sent by a Community Consultative Body representative via email to council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au and attach Minutes including the organisation's resolution

4.3.2. Applicants must demonstrate compliance with this Policy and include all relevant details including:

- a. proposed text or images
- b. design and site plan
- c. preferred location for the memorial garden
- d. demonstrated community consultation (including affected residents)

4.3.3. Initial review of the application will be made by Council Officers in accordance with the criteria in this Policy

4.3.4. Any request for a memorial garden within a public open space area that is managed by but not owned by Council will initially be assessed by Council referring to this Policy. If assessed by Council as conforming to this Policy, the request will be referred to the landowner for final approval. Approval from other responsible authorities may be required if a plaque or memorial is proposed on land controlled by legislation.

4.3.5. The proposed design and layout, wording and location shall be submitted to the relevant Asset Custodian for Department Manager's approval.

4.3.6. Approval for the design and layout, wording and location of any proposed plaque or memorial rests with the Manager, Community Planning and Projects Department.

4.3.7. A Council resolution will be required to approve the installation of the memorial garden.

4.3.8. Once approved, the detail design, manufacture and installation will be coordinated by Council's Community Planning and Projects Department.

4.3.9. The Community Consultative Body will be required to manage all requests for the placement of a plaque or memorial within the memorial garden.

4.4 Related Documents

Community Infrastructure Strategic Plan

Community Consultative Body Policy

Community Strategic Plan

Memorial Obelisk – Ulladulla Civic Centre – New Plaques Procedure PRD20/171

5. Review

This Policy statement will be reviewed:

- Within 12 months of the date of the election of a new Council, or
- Every four years, or
- As directed by Council