

Post Exhibition – Naming Proposal – Wiriyagan Place, Alexandria

File No: X116933.031

Summary

As part of the development of the Alexandra Canal Depot, a new private road was built and requires naming.

This report recommends that Council provide approval to name a private road on this site "Wiriyagan Place," enabling an application to be made to the Geographical Names Board for the naming of the private road.

Wiriyagan (pronounced wirr-ie-yay-gan) is a Gadigal word, documented in Jakelin Troy's book *The Sydney Language*, describing a low-growing fruit-bearing tree, either a prostrate banksia or a melaleuca.

The use of Gadigal language and the choice of a resilient local endemic plant shows respect to the men and women including Aboriginal staff who work at the depot and who care for the trees throughout our city.

This naming proposal complies with the City of Sydney naming policy.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the adoption of the name "Wiriyagan Place" for the space identified in Attachment A to the subject report; and
- (B) an application be made to the Geographical Names Board for the naming of the place as approved in (A), in accordance with the Geographical Names Act 1996.

Attachments

Attachment A. Map Showing Location of the Place

Attachment B. Community Engagement Report

Background

1. As part of the development of the Alexandra Canal Depot, a new private road was built to connect the depot with Bourke Road, Alexandria.
2. This is a private road that Council is responsible for maintaining and naming.
3. Staff at the depot strongly supported recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture at the facility through the naming of rooms and artworks.
4. "Wiryagan" is a Gadigal word, documented in Jakelin Troy's book *The Sydney Language*. It describes a low-growing fruit-bearing tree, a prostrate banksia or a melaleuca.
5. The use of Gadigal language, and the choice of a resilient local endemic plant species, shows respect to the men and women, including Aboriginal staff, who work at Alexandra Canal Depot. These staff members are directly involved in Caring for Country, including maintaining the trees and streets throughout our city.
6. The proposed name complies with the City of Sydney naming policy. Specifically:
 - Principle 2: Uniqueness - duplication is avoided with other existing names in a 10-kilometre radius.
 - Principle 3: This name acknowledges the multicultural nature of our society. Inclusiveness and addressing the imbalance of previous approaches are significant priorities for new names.
 - Principle 4: New names using local Aboriginal language are encouraged, especially for parks and open spaces, and shall be in the local Gadigal language.
 - Principle 6: Local or Cultural Relevance - the name has local relevance, reflecting the heritage and history of the local landscape and its plants.
 - Principle 13: This name conforms to the Geographical Names Board policies on addressing and place names as evidenced by the fact that "Wiryagan Place" has received in-principle approval from the Geographical Names Board.
7. On 13 November 2024, the name was presented to the City's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel and they were supportive of the name.
8. On 15 November 2024, the name was approved by the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council.
9. "Wiryagan Place" has received pre-approval status with the Geographical Names Board. This means that the proposed name complies with the Geographical Names Board's requirements for language use for road names and that there are no duplication issues with this name. It has been thereby reserved for City of Sydney use as a road name for a period of 2 years.
10. Naming this private road is important for wayfinding and access for emergency vehicles.
11. Community consultation was held between 14 July and 11 August 2025.
12. We received a total of 7 submissions during the consultation. Six submissions were in favour of the name and 1 opposed the name.

13. The Sydney Your Say page was visited 121 times during the public exhibition period.
14. The road we are proposing to name provides access to the City of Sydney Alexandra Canal Depot and depots operated by Woollahra Council and Waverley Council. Both Woollahra and Waverley councils were informed about the consultation and both responded, raising no objections to the proposed name.
15. The road is classed as a private road and is managed by the strata group BCS Strata. This naming proposal was approved at their Annual General Meeting held on 25 August 2025.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

16. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This report is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 1 - Responsible governance and stewardship - formally naming the park will ensure its gazettal and recognition with the NSW Geographical Names Board.
 - (b) Direction 5 - A city for walking, cycling and public transport - formally naming the park will assist in wayfinding.
 - (c) Direction 8 - A thriving cultural life - supports recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage and history in public spaces and streets.

Organisational Impact

17. Naming the road will have minimal organisational impact. Signage will be installed once the name is gazetted.

Risks

18. There are no identified risks associated with the naming proposal.
19. This naming proposal is within the City's risk appetite:
 - (a) it helps to ensure public safety and meet community expectations by assisting with wayfinding, consistent with the City's encouragement of public spaces that prioritise health and safety, foster wellbeing and comply with applicable legislative and regulatory requirements.
 - (b) it ensures we comply with our legal and regulatory requirements.
 - (c) it supports the achievement of our strategic objectives.

Social / Cultural / Community

20. The name has local relevance, reflecting the heritage and history of people, events, and the community.

Financial Implications

21. There are sufficient funds available in the 2025/26 operational budget for the installation of the street signage.

Relevant Legislation

22. The Geographic Names Act 1966 (NSW) and Geographical Names Board Guidelines. The recommended name complies with this legislation and meets the Geographical Names Board Guidelines.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

23. Should Council approve the name, a formal naming application will be submitted to the Geographical Names Board for consideration.

Public Consultation

24. Community consultation was held between 14 July and 11 August 2025.
25. The Sydney Your Say web page provided details of the street location, background of the origins of the name and a guide to pronunciation. A link to an online survey provided people with the opportunity to give their feedback. The page received 121 views during the consultation period.
26. On-street signage was installed around the street and a notification letter was delivered to 58 local residents and businesses (75-metre radius from the road).
27. We received a total of 7 submissions during the consultation. Six submissions were in favour of the name and 1 opposed the name.
28. The most common reasons given in support of the proposed name were:
 - (a) Supports Indigenous recognition (2 comments)
 - (b) Beautiful / cool name (2 comments)
 - (c) In support of naming the street with Indigenous language and local tree species (1 comment)
29. The reason given in opposition to the name was:
 - (a) Objection to 'virtue signalling' and names should reflect the wishes of local residents (1 comment)

30. More information about the community engagement can be found at Attachment B - Community Engagement Report.
31. If Council approves the name, an application will be made to the Geographical Names Board for gazettal. As part of this process the Geographical Names Board may also notify the public through their website as part of their routine procedure. If objections are raised, the proposal is returned to Council for further comment or amendment if required.

KATE DEACON

Executive Director Strategic Development and Engagement

Gareth Jenkins, Senior Community Engagement Coordinator