

Naming Proposal - Public Exhibition - Ngamuru Avenue

File No: X100685

Summary

This report recommends that, subject to community consultation, Council provides in principle support to the new road connecting Bowden Street in Alexandria to Geddes Avenue in Zetland, being named "Ngamuru Avenue".

The City of Sydney is building a new road and cycleway that will connect Geddes Avenue in the Green Square town centre with Bowden Street in Alexandria. It will also link to Botany Road, O'Riordan Street and Bourke Road.

The new road and cycleway will prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and also be accessible by emergency vehicles and local vehicles. It will provide an important green, walking and cycling east-west connection for the communities of Alexandria and Green Square.

"Ngamuru" is a word from the Gadigal language - nga (see), muru (path). This means 'to see the way' or 'compass'. This definition is described in the book 'The Sydney Language' by Jakelin Troy.

The word "Ngamuru", linked to direction finding and the location of a path from one place to another is well suited to this new avenue, the major function of which, is to connect Green Square to Alexandria. The reference to path is particularly relevant as this new avenue will prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport with its separate walking path and cycleway.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council provide in-principle approval to name the new road connecting Bowden Street in Alexandria to Geddes Avenue in Zetland, "Ngamuru Avenue", and that the name be placed on public exhibition for a minimum period of 28 days; and
- (B) note that a further report will be submitted to Council on the results of the public consultation process.

Attachments

Attachment A. Map Showing Location of Road

Background

1. The City of Sydney is building a new road and cycleway that will connect Geddes Avenue in the Green Square town centre with Bowden Street in Alexandria. It will also link to Botany Road, O’Riordan Street and Bourke Road.
2. It is identified as a local road in the Sydney Development Control Plan 2012.
3. The new road and cycleway will prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and also be accessible to emergency vehicles and local vehicles.
4. It will provide an important green, walking and cycling east-west connection for the communities of Alexandria and Green Square.
5. Works are nearing completion. The avenue is scheduled to open in July 2024.
6. The process for naming this avenue has been active since 2021, when a proposal to name the avenue after Dr Margaret Harper was presented to the July 2021 meeting of the Corporate, Finance, Properties and Tenders Committee meeting (Item 6.3 Public Exhibition - Naming Proposal - Dr Margaret Harper Avenue).
7. Following the discussion at the Corporate, Finance, Properties and Tenders Committee, the report recommending the name Dr Margaret Harper Avenue was withdrawn in order to further consider the matters raised.
8. A new name for this avenue was considered by the City of Sydney’s Naming Proposals Working Group in 2023/24. The name "Ngamuru Avenue" has been selected by the Naming Proposals Working Group, in accordance with the City's Naming Policy which encourages the use of local Gadigal language words and that they can be applied to describe the function of a place. The word was selected using 'The Sydney Language' publication as a reference and with input from members of the Indigenous Leadership and Engagement Team.
9. In accordance with the City of Sydney’s Naming Policy, the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council has been given an opportunity to supply feedback on this name via a letter from City of Sydney Chief Executive Officer to the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council in April 2024. The Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council has indicated their support for this proposed name. City staff from the Naming Proposals Working Group presented the name "Ngamuru Avenue" to the City of Sydney's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel in May 2024. The Panel discussed the name and provided advice regarding pronunciation and ways that the word has been used previously within the community.
10. Pronunciation advice from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel was similar to the pronunciation advice within 'The Sydney Language' publication, which suggests ‘ng’ is pronounced as in the word ‘sing’. They recommended the spelling nga be used to explain the pronunciation of the first part of the word.

11. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel also mentioned that this word (with a variation on spelling) was previously used as the name of an employment service in Redfern. The City Historian confirmed that the NAAMROO Skillshare Centre on Redfern Street was recorded by Steve Miller in the cultural mapping work in 2012.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

12. 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 lane 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 avenue will assist in wayfinding.
 - (c) Direction 8 - A thriving cultural and creative life - selecting an Aboriginal word to name this new major avenue will increase the public's understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture. This proposal would recognise local Aboriginal cultural heritage through naming, related interpretive signage and other opportunities as they arise.

Organisational Impact

13. The City will ensure signage (street and interpretive) is installed once construction is complete. It will have minimal organisational impact.
14. There are no identified risks associated with the naming proposal.

Social / Cultural / Community

15. This proposal would recognise local Aboriginal cultural heritage through naming, related interpretive signage and other opportunities as they arise.
16. The community will have an opportunity to comment on the naming proposal during the exhibition period.

Economic

17. The new road is an important east-west connection to the Green Square town centre. Giving it a powerful and relevant name will strengthen the identity of the area.

Financial Implications

18. There are funds available in the draft 2024/25 operational budget, currently on public exhibition, for the installation of street and interpretive signage.

Relevant Legislation

19. 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

20. A name will be needed when the road is open in the second half of 2024. Should Council approve the name following community consultation, a formal naming application will be submitted to the Geographical Names Board for consideration.

Public Consultation

21. The current process for naming of public spaces generally proceeds as follows:
 - (a) in-principle approval by Council of the proposed name;
 - (b) public notification of the naming proposals with a minimum 28-day response time;
 - (c) Council approval following community consultation;
 - (d) assessment by the Geographical Names Board of New South Wales through its formal application process; and
 - (e) approval by the Geographical Names Board and subsequent publication in the NSW Government Gazette.
22. The Geographical Names Board will also notify the public through their website as part of their routine procedure for the naming of public places. If objections are raised, the proposal is returned to Council for further comment or amendment if required.
23. The naming proposal will be advertised in on the Sydney Your Say website, notices will be letterboxed to surrounding properties and there will be a public notice on site.

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