

**PUBLIC MEMORIALS AND PLAQUES**

<b>DIVISION</b>	<b>BUSINESS UNIT</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY AREA</b>
Executive Services	CEO	Councillor Services

**OBJECTIVES:**

Policy objectives in relation to plaques and memorials are to:

1. Provide a consistent and transparent policy framework to deal sensitively with the placement, installation, construction, alteration, maintenance and removal of a range of memorials, plaques and interpretive signs that commemorate Plantagenet people, culture and history in the Shire of Plantagenet. This includes installations on or in buildings, on roadsides, on municipal roads and other public land.
2. Provide an equitable decision-making approach to requests for installation of memorials and plaques.
3. Ensure that proposals are assessed and managed in a timely manner.
4. Minimise the risks and environmental impact of plaques and memorials.

**POLICY:**

1. Scope and Definitions

This policy applies to the following categories of plaques, memorials, and interpretive signs installed in Plantagenet on public land, under the Council's care, control and management, and in some instances on private property. The following definitions are provided:

1. Memorials are permanent objects or structures designed specifically to commemorate an individual, association or event. A plaque on a raised plinth is considered a memorial. Other examples include a park structure or shelter. They are durable and long-lasting. A sculpture or fabricated artwork may have a dedication but it is not considered under this Policy.
2. Plaques are a flat tablet of metal or other durable material which includes text and/or images to commemorate a person, group, event or historical information relative to the location. They have a fixed term life. The provision of an item of infrastructure, such as a bench seat or post, to which the plaque is attached, may be included.
3. Interpretive signs are information boards which include text and/or images which commemorate an event or a person and/or provide historical context or other information relevant to the location. Interpretive signs may be free standing or attached to another object or building and usually have a fixed term life. All designs must be approved by the Council.
4. Commemorative trees are trees in honour or memory of a person or persons, organisation or event.
5. Landscape features may include enhancement of specific areas of existing parks.

6. Restoration of an existing feature or memorial undertaken by or in conjunction with a community group to commemorate a place, organisation, event or person. This may be a suitable alternative to creating a new memorial.
7. Roadside fatality memorials are small markers with or without inscription plaques that are provided for the express purpose of commemorating a person or persons who have died in an accident at that site. Specifically refers to memorials on Council roads only and are usually ephemeral.
8. Permanent memorials are any type of plaque, sign or monument designed and constructed for permanency. They are routinely maintained and refurbished.
9. Fixed term memorials are any type of plaque, sign, furniture, tree or feature which has a fixed life. It may be maintained but not renewed. Typical life spans are between five and fifteen years.
10. Ephemeral memorials are temporary memorials or markers with a life span up to one year.

This policy applies to:

- a) Requests made by Councillors, Shire officers, individuals and community groups; and
- b) Applications for land owned by the Shire of Plantagenet or under the Council's management.

This policy does not apply to:

- a) Works of art and their acquisition, maintenance and disposal.
- b) The naming of parks, roads bridges and public facilities which are covered under the Council Policy *Future Street and Reserve Names*.
- c) Any plaque or memorial subject to the Council's Cemetery Local Law, as amended from time to time.
- d) Memorial seating which is specifically addressed in Council Policy *Memorial Seating*.

## 2. Statement

- a) The Shire of Plantagenet recognises that plaques, memorials and signs are important in celebrating the region, historical events or the contribution of organisations or individuals to the municipality.
- b) Applications for establishment of memorials will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with this policy and requests must state the community benefit of recognising an individual or association with a memorial.

## 3. General Guidelines

- a) The Council may initiate the installation of plaques on Council owned buildings or structures to commemorate their opening or a historically significant event.
- b) The Council will consider requests from private individuals and community groups for the installation of plaques, memorials or signs on roads or Council owned facilities or properties in accordance with this policy.
- c) Design, construction or installation of any memorial on land or road owned or managed by the Council will require Council approval.
- d) All costs associated with the establishment, fabrication, construction or the installation of a memorial shall be borne by the proponents. The Council may

contribute grant money or in-kind services. However, the responsibility for ensuring sufficient funds are raised by individual contribution, subscription or grants is the responsibility of the proponent.

- e) Memorials, signs and plaques promoted by the Council will be funded by the Council.
- f) The Council will monitor all memorials for condition and safety. The Council will maintain all approved memorials except for roadside fatality memorials.
- g) The significance of time limited memorials and plaques will be reviewed after 15 years from installation or at the fixed term. A decision on whether the plaque, sign or memorial is retained, removed or decommissioned will be undertaken by the Council.
- h) The placement of memorials shall take into account Council planning requirements or other regulatory requirements such as road safety requirements.
- i) New memorials shall not commemorate a person, organisation or event already commemorated elsewhere in the municipality.
- j) Memorials for domestic pets and animals are not permitted on public land or public buildings, unless specifically designated for the purpose. i.e. pet cemetery.

#### 4. Ownership and Life of the Memorial

All memorials or plaques placed on Council owned or managed land are deemed to be assets of the Shire of Plantagenet and managed in accordance with the Shire's policies and procedures.

Where the condition of a memorial or plaque is poor or the site is no longer appropriate, Council officers will take all reasonable measures to contact the person or organisation who initiated the memorial prior to its removal or relocation.

#### 5. Memorials for Council Consideration

Applications for memorial features, plaques, interpretive signs and war memorials to be located on Council owned or managed land (Crown Land) will be restricted to major cultural/heritage figures and places, or in remembrance of war events and sacrifices.

#### 6. Memorial Features

Memorial features such as a park bench/seat, fountain, statue, ornamental feature, sculpture or other significant or unique artwork will be considered on a case-by-case basis in line with the following:

- a) Proposals may be subject to the Council's budgetary processes.
- b) Management plans and approvals processes, where applicable, shall form part of the determination on whether the location is suitable.
- c) The Shire of Plantagenet will manage the installation of any memorial.
- d) If the memorial deteriorates beyond repair, becomes unsightly or unsafe, the Shire may remove it.
- e) The memorial may be relocated should the site be redeveloped or significantly change in character.

- f) If the proposed memorial is in the form of public artwork such as a sculpture, tapestry, painting or mural, it must comply with the above criteria and any applicable policies adopted by the Shire of Plantagenet.
- g) The Shire may choose not to maintain or replace any plaque in the event of damage to or removal of the plaque.
- h) Council officers will take all reasonable measures to contact the person or organisation who initiated the placement of a plaque prior to its removal or relocation.

## 7. War Memorials

A war memorial commemorates the sacrifice of those Australians who have died during or from causes attributable to war. They vary widely in form, but all have the intention to remind us of those we have lost to war.

The following applies to war memorials:

- The Mount Barker Sub-branch of The Returned and Services League must be consulted prior to tabling a report to the Council; and
- Proposals may be subject to the Council's budgetary processes.

## 8. Heritage Recognition Markers

Heritage recognition markers may be installed by the Council on private and public property and communicate the listing of a building, its history and its significance.

The following criteria apply to Heritage recognition markers:

- The property must be State or Local Heritage listed.
- Development approval is required.
- Property owner permission is required.
- Proposals may be subject to the Council's budgetary processes.

Markers are generally installed directly onto a building or fence. If this is not possible, the marker will be post mounted as close to the building or fence as practical. All wording on markers is developed by Council staff in consultation with the applicant and property owners.

## 9. Memorial/Commemorative Trees and Plantings

Requests for planting of memorial/commemorative tree(s) in any appropriate street, park or reserve within the Shire of Plantagenet are available based on the following:

- a) They comply with any existing Master Plan or planting design in that place or street and the nursery standards in accordance with the Shire's *Rural Road Verge Vegetation Management Policy*, *Town Street Verge Management Policy* or *Street Tree Plan or Policy* adopted from time to time.
- b) The type, location and planting of any tree will be managed by the Shire.
- c) No special care or guarantee of replacement is given.
- d) To ensure that trees are protected from damage and public risk is minimised, plaques will not be installed on or around trees.

## 10. Works of Art

Proposed works of art as memorials must demonstrate, in the opinion of the Council, unique design merit.

#### 11. Restoration of Existing Memorials

Proposals to restore or upgrade existing memorials will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will usually involve public consultation prior to approval by the Council.

The addition of new plaques to existing memorials will only be considered if there is a clear connection to the original commemoration. For example, commemorating the restoration of a memorial by a local group on the anniversary of an event.

Prior to commencing any restoration work, every reasonable effort will be made to contact the original proponent. In the event the memorial is damaged or requires repair and the original proponent is no longer in existence, the Council may resolve to repair or remove the memorial.

#### 12. Roadside Memorials

The Shire of Plantagenet recognises that some members of the community may wish to mark the location of a fatal crash on the road network and commemorate the death of individuals with a roadside memorial.

Proposals for roadside memorials will be considered sensitively by the Council but are not encouraged. The views of adjacent residents will be considered.

The type and placement of memorials shall conform to Main Roads WA Policy and Guideless Roadside Memorials and must generally conform to the following principles:

- The siting of the memorial must not distract drivers and shall not be in a position which increases the risk for people wishing to visit the memorial.
- The memorial must be made of material and installed in such a way as to not cause injury if struck by a vehicle.
- The Council cannot accept responsibility for the maintenance of this type of memorial and cannot guarantee against loss or damage or relocation due to road maintenance works or works by other authorities.

Roadside memorials are ephemeral and may be left in place for a maximum of 12 months.

#### 13. Changes to Memorials

The Council reserves the right to relocate memorials in the event of other works at the site. Care will be taken to ensure that individuals and groups are advised in advance of the relocation or temporary removal of any memorial.

#### 14. Application Processes

Initial proposals for plaques, memorials and sign from individuals and groups shall be in writing and addressed to the Chief Executive Officer at the Shire of Plantagenet.

Proposals should address the following key points:

- a) The details of the proponents of the plaque, memorial or sign. If more than one group is involved, then letters of support from these organisations should be included.
- b) The type of memorial proposed.
- c) The reason for the memorial and the connection with the Plantagenet district and the specific location proposed.

- d) The proposed siting of the memorial and the reason for choosing the site.
- e) The approximate cost of the memorial if known and the funding arrangements.

Council officers will normally consider the initial proposal before referring the application to the Council and, in some cases, written community input relevant to the subject of the plaque and/or memorial will be sought with external organisations appropriate to the subject of the plaque, e.g. Returned and Services League committee, Plantagenet Historical Society.

Unless otherwise specified, all costs for memorials/plaques are to be borne by the applicant/donor, including any additional costs specific to the installation.

The Shire will install the memorial/plaque, ensuring consistency with Shire furniture design and/or tree planting guidelines.

Approved applications will be recorded on a Public Memorials Register for reference. This is not a public register as it will contain applicant details.

**ADOPTED: 28 JANUARY 2020**

**LAST REVIEW: 22 FEBRUARY 2022**