

Street Naming and Numbering Policy

Produced by:

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Introduction to this policy

Manchester City Council (the Council) has the legal responsibility to ensure that streets are named and properties are numbered. The Council has the power to approve or reject property addresses submitted by developers or the general public, or to prescribe its own addressing schemes.

This power extends to commercial property as well as to domestic addresses. Where street names or previous numbers have been established without reference to the Council, the Council has the authority to issue renaming or renumbering notices, under Sections 17-21 of The Public Health Act 1925 and Section 22 of the Greater Manchester Act 1981.

In addition to complying with appropriate legislation, this policy is compliant with the standards laid down by GeoPlace, the custodians of the National Address Gazetteer and the National Street Gazetteer, in their document "Data Entry Conventions and Best Practice for Addresses". It also draws extensively on the recommendations of their Street Naming and Numbering Working Group. The Council is required to adhere to GeoPlace's standards under the terms of the Public Sector Mapping Agreement.

All property development and address changes within the Manchester City Council area are subject to the guidance contained within this Policy. Maintaining a comprehensive and high standard for naming streets and numbering or naming properties is essential in order to:

- Facilitate emergency services finding a property without undue delay, thereby preserving life and limb;
- Provide consistency of property based information across local government and within the community of users for addresses which aids service delivery;
- Facilitate the reliable delivery of services and products; and
- Help with the location of addresses for visitors.

Anyone seeking an address change, or the creation of an address for a new property, must apply to Manchester City Council following the process outlined in this policy document.

Responsibility for Property Addressing

All elements of an address, with the exception of postcode and post town, are defined by the Council. The numbers and names assigned to property and the official names assigned to streets are the intellectual property of the Council.

Allocation of postcodes is managed by Royal Mail and must be confirmed by them. The Council will undertake this process on the applicant's behalf and inform the applicant and other interested parties. The maintenance of postcode information, and any future change to individual postcodes or postcode sectors, is the responsibility of Royal Mail.

The Council accepts no responsibility or liability for omission of postcode or post town information, nor for any failure of services arising from this omission.

Naming Streets and Numbering Properties

The need for a new street name, or the renumbering of properties can occur for a variety of reasons including:

- New build developments, including demolishing and re-building a single property.
- Splits, for example conversion of a single building to flats or commercial units.
- Mergers, for example conversion of two or more units into one.
- Moving the main entrance to a different street.
- Any change to the building name if the property is not numbered.

Property re-numbering or street re-naming

Re-numbering or re-naming a group of existing properties or re-naming streets may cause costs and/or disruption to individual occupiers and wherever possible should be avoided. It is normally only considered when changes occur, such as the inclusion of a new development, which are likely to cause problems for the emergency services, or where the existing addresses could cause problems with property location.

If the Council considers that a new development will mean that existing streets and/or street numbers will need altering the developer will be required to consult with affected residents and make every effort to reach a satisfactory outcome. This may include the provision of some compensation to cover costs and inconvenience. **The Council will not proceed until it has evidence of this consultation.**

If the Council decides that the renaming or renumbering should go ahead it will initiate the legal processes to make the necessary changes. The developer will be required to cover the costs of this work.

The Council will post notice of the intended street re-name along the affected street and any person aggrieved by the intended order can appeal to the Magistrates Court within 21 days of the notice being posted.

Where a street is created, all costs for the erection of new street name plates will be paid for by the developer. Maintenance of street name plates becomes the responsibility of the Council only once the developer has left the site and the street has been adopted.

Application Process

The applicant for a street naming or number request should be the developer, property owner, or an agent acting on their behalf.

Property developers or owners are welcome to suggest names for new streets. These should be submitted to the Street Naming and Numbering Team for consideration against the Council's criteria, which is outlined in this document.

The process for reaching a final decision is as follows:

- Suggestions for a new name, rename or renumbering are sent to Manchester City Council's Street Naming and Numbering Team.

- These suggestions are evaluated against the criteria for street names and numbering until an acceptable option or range of options is agreed.
- This suggestion or shortlist of suggestions is then shared with the relevant ward councillors for consultation.
- This process is run virtually with all relevant parties given 10 working days to respond with comments or alternative suggestions.
- Alternative suggestions will also be evaluated against the criteria for street names and numbering.
- Once a decision has been reached the new address will be formally allocated and all relevant bodies will be notified.

The exception to this would be in cases involving large scale developments where a number of decisions are required or in particularly complex situations. Where this is the case a Panel of relevant parties, including the ward councillors, will be established to meet in person to review the proposals. The process will then default to the steps outlined above.

This process will take at least 3 months to allow for notification of intention to be sent to affected residents and for consultation with relevant ward councillors. This timeframe includes the requirement for the Council to publish a legal notice of intention to rename on the street (up to 28 days) and then to agree a date for existing residents to change their address.

Where a dispute arises, the matter will be decided by the Deputy Chief Executive, in line with the Council's constitution.

No street name plate is allowed to be erected until the street name has been confirmed in writing by the Council.

Should any person display an unofficial street name or number on their property, then that person shall be liable to a fine under the provision of Criminal Justice Act 1982.

Criteria for Naming Streets

The Street Naming and Numbering team will use the following conventions when deciding if a new street name is acceptable.

Any street name suggestions sent to the Council must follow these guidelines which are in line with best practice as laid out by GeoPlace, the custodians of the National Address Gazetteer and the National Street Gazetteer.

The Council will endeavour to promote names with a local or historic significance to the area. However, it is not sufficient cause to object to a name if it fails to meet this criterion.

- New street names will not duplicate any name already in use within the city, including areas adjoining neighbouring authorities. A variation in the terminal word, for example, "street", "road", "avenue", will not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a street name.
- The street name should have an appropriate suffix which must be descriptive of the road, for example, 'Close' to indicate a cul-de-sac.
- Street names with phonetically similar names are to be avoided, for example Willows Avenue and Winnows Avenue.
- Street names that may be considered or construed as obscene, racist or which would contravene any aspect of the Council's equal opportunities policies will not be acceptable.
- New street names must not include a number, for example, 20 Seven Foot Lane sounds the same as 27 Foot Lane.
- Street names that may be open to re-interpretation by graffiti or shortening of the name must be avoided.

- New street names will not be assigned to new developments when such developments can satisfactorily be included in the current numbering scheme of the street providing access.
- Street names must not begin with the word 'The'.
- Street names must not contain any punctuation of any kind.
- Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell as these may lead to confusion in an emergency situation or result in demands for a change of address from occupiers.
- New street names shall not end in "s" where it can be construed as either a possessive or plural.
- In order to avoid causing offence either by inclusion or exclusion, no street will be named after any living person (For naming streets after notable people see separate section).
- Names that promote a company, service or product will not be allowed. Names based on a developer's trading name are seen as advertising and are not acceptable. An exception to this may be made for a company that no longer exists, if used solely in an historical context and the claim of advertising cannot be made.
- Street names must not have a name with Royal connotations unless the consent of the Lord Chamberlain's office has been granted. It is the developer's responsibility to obtain this consent. For further information see the [UK royal website](#)
- We reserve the right to object to any suggested name deemed to be inappropriate.

Street Suffixes

All new street names will end with a terminal word. Street names with no suffix will not be allowed due to the potential for confusion. Existing streets with no suffix will not be renamed unless required for other reasons. Permitted suffixes are:

- Avenue - Minor residential road
- Boulevard - Major multi-lane thoroughfare
- Circle / Circus - Circular Shaped road only
- Close - Cul-de-Sac only
- Crescent - Crescent shaped roads
- Drive - Minor residential road
- End - Cul-de-Sac only
- Gardens - Garden fronted buildings
- Grove - Garden fronted buildings
- Hill - Main road ascending/descending steeply
- Lane - Minor residential road
- Mews - Short road at the rear of, and parallel to, a terrace of buildings
- Park - Short, residential street, usually a cul-de-sac
- Parkway - Major urban highway. Properties are not normally addressed to them
- Path - Narrow pedestrian only passage
- Place - Small residential street or a narrow street or small square.
- Quay - Road immediately parallel to a navigable waterway
- Road - Main Road and Thoroughfare
- Street - Main Road and Thoroughfare
- Walk - Narrow pedestrian only passage
- Way - Very large arterial road, a narrow pedestrian only passage, or a street connecting two major roads.
- Wharf - Roads immediately parallel to a navigable waterway
- Yard - Collection of business properties around a central courtyard

The use of 'North', 'East', 'South' or 'West' (as in 'Alfred Road North' and 'Alfred Road South') for new streets is only acceptable where the road is continuous and passes over a major junction. It is not acceptable when the road is in two separate parts with no vehicular access between the two to ensure streets and addresses are easily locatable.

The Council will consider other suffixes if the developer can demonstrate a particular reason for the choice, such as an historical map or document, providing the chosen suffix is descriptive of the street.

Property numbering policy

- All properties must be numbered onto the street name which provides direct access to the property, which is generally the street that the front door of the property faces.
- New streets shall be numbered so that odd numbers are on the left hand side and even numbers on the right, commencing from the primary entrance to the street or in the direction of travel from town where applicable. Where the street is a thoroughfare between two other streets, the numbering shall commence at the end of the street nearest to the centre of the town.
- A cul-de-sac should usually be numbered consecutively, in a clockwise direction. However, where there is scope for a future development to add more properties to the street the Council may decide, on a case by case basis, to number differently.
- Streets which are not cul-de-sac will only be numbered consecutively where no properties exist on the opposite side of the street and there is no potential for a future development to create such, for example, where the street runs along a river bank.
- All numbers, including the number 13, must be used in the proper sequence and there shall be no exclusion of any number due to superstitious, cultural or personal preference. However, gaps may be incorporated in the number sequence to allow for possible future infill development.
- In cases of subdivisions sharing an access point, only the term 'Flat' or 'Unit' will be used.
- Flats and Units will be numbered, for example Flat 1, Flat 2, Flat 3 and so on. A numbering scheme such as Flat A, Flat B or First Floor Flat will not be used.
- Flats within a multi-storey block may be numbered consecutively from the ground floor upwards, following the order in which flats are reached, or numbered 'hotel style', where the floor level is incorporated in the number, for example first floor would be 101, 102, 103 and so on, the second floor would be 201, 202, 203 and so on. The Council will determine the appropriate numbering scheme based on the size and layout of the development.
- Where internal units are accessed via a shared ground floor entrance, they will be numbered as Flat 1, 24 Any Street; Flat 2, 24 Any Street, and so on.
- Where a block of flats has more than one street door, each street door will have a separate street address. Flats will then be addressed and numbered according to the street door from which they are accessed, for example Flat 1, 22 Any Street; Flat 1, 24 Any Street. The same applies for commercial or industrial blocks, or mixed blocks.
- Punctuation marks are not allowed, for example Flat 1.01 or Flat 11/01.
- When new properties are built on an existing street and there are no available numbers to use whilst retaining the current sequence, a letter shall be used as a suffix, for example 15A.
- Where there is an exceptionally large number of properties requiring a suffix, it may be more appropriate to renumber any existing properties to incorporate a new numbering sequence. This should be avoided where possible due to the disruption it causes to existing residents.

- New street names will not be assigned for the sole purpose of avoiding numbers with a suffix.
- Property numbers will be displayed as numerals and not written, for instance 26 Smith Street, not Twenty-Six, Smith Street.
- A business name shall not take the place of a number or a building name.
- Private garages and buildings used for housing vehicles and similar purposes will not be numbered.
- A piece of land, for example a farmer's field, cannot be given an official address. Only properties on that piece of land can have a conventional address for the purposes of delivering mail and services.

Adding a name to a numbered building

The Council will only name blocks of flats or commercial buildings. It will check the existing gazetteer and review every request to add or change an existing property name.

A property with a number must always use and display that number. Where a property has a name and an official number the number must always be included in the address and displayed on the property. The name cannot be regarded as an alternative to a street number. This is enforceable under section 22 of the Greater Manchester Act 1981. Any request to remove a number from an official address will be refused.

The following criteria should be considered when applying to add a name to a numbered property:

- It must not duplicate any name already in use within the Council's boundary because this can lead to the misdirection of emergency services as well as incorrect delivery of mail, goods and services. A variation in the terminal word, for example, "House", "Court", "Building", will not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a building name.
- Building names with phonetically similar names are to be avoided, for example Willows House and Winnows House.
- Names that may be considered or construed as obscene, racist or which would contravene any aspect of the council's equal opportunities policies will not be acceptable.
- Names that may be open to re-interpretation by graffiti or shortening of the name will be avoided.
- In order to avoid causing offence either by inclusion or exclusion, no buildings will be named after any living person.
- For naming buildings after notable people see separate section.
- New street names shall not end in "s" where it can be construed as either a possessive or plural.
- Building names must not begin with the word 'The'.
- The name does not contain any punctuation of any kind.

- Building names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell as these may lead to confusion in an emergency situation or result in demands for a change of address from occupiers.
- Names that promote a company, service or product will not be allowed. Names based on a developer's trading name are seen as advertising and are not acceptable. An exception to this may be made for a company that no longer exists, if used solely in an historical context and the claim of advertising cannot be made.
- We reserve the right to object to any suggested name deemed to be inappropriate

Building Name Suffixes

All new building names will end with a terminal word. Building names with no suffix will not be allowed due to the potential for confusion. Existing buildings with no suffix will not be renamed unless required for other reasons. Permitted suffixes are:

- Building - Any large distinctive building
- Centre - Business centre
- Court - Any low rise development
- Heights - Tall building at least twice as tall as it is wide/long
- House - Any residential or commercial building
- Mansions - Large building occupying an entire block, which has no units with street doors
- Point - Tall building at least twice as tall as it is wide/long
- Studios - Mixed business/residential only
- Tower - Tall building at least twice as tall as it is wide/long

If a building has historically had a suffix which is not on this list, it may be allowed even if it has dropped out of use in recent years. Developers will need to provide evidence of the historical suffix, for instance an old map showing the original building name.

Naming Streets or Buildings after notable people

To preserve the exclusivity of this kind of commemoration it needs to be applied sparingly. On that basis only one such name per development will be allowed. There are also a set of further principles which should be adhered to:

- The full name of a living person should never be used as a street or building name.
- The full name of person who gave his or her life protecting the people of Manchester could be commemorated in a street or building name one year after death. Efforts should be made to choose an appropriate location, though this would be dependent on a suitable development taking place. The developer will be required to get consent for this naming from the next of kin or trustee of the person being commemorated.
- The full name of a person who made an outstanding contribution to the city or gained an enduring international reputation while working in Manchester, may be commemorated in a street or building name five years after death. The developer will be required to get consent for this naming from the next of kin, or trustee, of the person being commemorated. Where the passage of time makes this impractical efforts must be made to publicise the intended honour, to give descendants an opportunity to comment.

- The full name of a person who was born or raised in the city and subsequently gained an enduring international reputation may be commemorated in a street or building name five years after death. The developer will be required to get consent for this naming from the next of kin, or trustee, of the person being commemorated. Where the passage of time makes this impractical efforts must be made to publicise the intended honour, to give descendants an opportunity to comment.
- The names of military personnel associated with Manchester by birth or by military unit and who were awarded medals for bravery may be commemorated in a street or building name. The developer will be required to get consent for this from the regiment, squadron or ship in which the person was serving at the time the honour was bestowed, in addition to the consent of the next of kin or trustee - the military unit may be able to assist in contacting descendants. The street or building name will include the person's full name and the appropriate abbreviated medal name, but not his or her rank – for example, Albert Hill VC. Subject to meeting the criteria above.
- Other notable, eminent or worthy candidates may be honoured by having their surname (or occasionally forename instead) commemorated in a street or building name. Subject to meeting the criteria above.
- A brief citation may be added to the street or building sign at the developer's expense.
- As commemorations need to reflect Manchester's diversity, considerations as to difficulty of spelling or pronunciation will be eased.