

HUME CITY COUNCIL
Yulendj ngurrak
Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander
Recognition Policy

Policy reference No:	POL/145
File No:	HCC11/274
Strategic objective:	3.1 Foster socially connected and supported communities.
Adopted by Council:	1 May 2010
Re-Adopted:	27 April 2026
Date for review:	April 2030
Responsible officer:	Manager Community Health and Wellbeing
Department:	Community Health and Wellbeing

1 Policy Statement

Hume City Council recognises:

- 1.1 The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the land now known as Hume City – their Elders past, present, and emerging.
- 1.2 The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung) as the Registered Aboriginal Party for all of the lands, waterways and sky Country now known as Hume City.
- 1.3 All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Hume City.
- 1.4 The strength, resilience and creativity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- 1.5 The role past federal and state government policies have played in the social, cultural and economic dispossession of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the ongoing intergenerational trauma experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 1.6 The ways in which these forces combine to reinforce entrenched disadvantage, poor health outcomes, increased contact with the justice system and economic disadvantage.
- 1.7 The importance of self-determination, meaning that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold the knowledge and expertise about what is best for themselves, their families and their communities, and have the right to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.
- 1.8 Council’s role in healing and building positive relationships between Council and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as educating the broader public about the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, cultures and histories.
- 1.9 Council’s role in the broader process of truth telling, addressing social and economic disadvantages and working towards reconciliation.
- 1.10 Council’s role in working collaboratively with implementing Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung – Whole of Country Plan 2025-2035.
- 1.11 Council’s role in advocating for better outcomes with State and Federal governments.

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2 Purpose

2.1 This policy informs Council's recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

2.1.1 The Policy aligns with Hume's Council Plan 2025-2029 Strategic Objective.

2.1.2 An inclusive and socially connected community that celebrates diversity and culture.

2.1.3 Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' histories, cultures, resilience and the right to self-determination.

2.1.4 The Policy also aligns with our Social Justice Charter and our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) as well as Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Aboriginal Corporation's Whole of Country Plan 2025-2035

2.2 The Policy guides Councillors and Officers to appropriately articulate Council's commitment to the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a way of:

2.2.1 Building stronger connections between Council and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples leading to a more socially connected community.

2.2.2 Promoting truth telling and healing.

2.2.3 Encouraging respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, cultures and histories within Hume.

3 Scope

3.1 This policy provides guidance on:

3.1.1 The display of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flags along with the Australian and Council flag, and in accordance with the Australian National Flag protocols.

3.1.2 The formal Acknowledgement of the Traditional Owners of the land now known as Hume City and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at Council events, meetings and functions. (See definitions).

3.1.3 The display of symbols of recognition of the Traditional Owners of the land now known as Hume City and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities at municipal gateways and on Council owned facilities.

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- 3.1.4 The engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and representative organisations in the naming of roads, buildings, and suburbs.
- 3.1.5 The wording to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land now known as Hume City and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Council's policies, strategies, action plans, rates notices, and public-facing documents.

4 Objective

- 4.1 To formally recognise the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the land now known as Hume City.
- 4.2 To recognise all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Hume City.
- 4.3 To guide visible recognition through flags, signage, plaques, and public displays.
- 4.4 To guide Councillors and Council Officers in culturally appropriate recognition practices.
- 4.5 To guide consistent application of recognition protocols across Council operations, events, communications, and public assets.

5 Policy Implementation

- 5.1 In the implementation of this Policy, Council will regularly seek guidance from its Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAPWG) and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung to ensure practices continue to be culturally appropriate and meet community expectations.
- 5.2 **FLAGS**
- 5.2.1 This Policy applies to any Council sites that publicly displays the Australian flag and Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Island flag. Council must display these flags at the Civic Plaza, Broadmeadows and outside Craigieburn and Sunbury Customer Service Centres. In addition, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flags will be displayed in the Hume City Council Meeting Chambers.
- 5.2.2 In accordance with 3.1 and the Australian National Flag protocols, Council will consider additional sites for the display of appropriate flags on the suggestion of the RAPWG and/or the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung. This may include the acknowledgement of the following days of significance where flags would be flown at half-mast:

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- 13 February – National Apology Day of the Stolen Generations
- 26 May – National Sorry Day
- 31 May – Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service Day

5.2.3 Council will fly daily from the left, the Australian flag, Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Island flag.,

5.3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- 5.3.1 At the Statutory Meeting of Council, official functions where Council has invited guests and other significant Council events, Council will invite an Elder of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung to conduct a Welcome to Country. This will be booked through the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Aboriginal Heritage Corporation only.
- 5.3.2 Where an Elder of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung is unavailable to present a Welcome to Country an Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners will be read.
- 5.3.3 Acknowledgments of Traditional Owners reflect the longstanding connection of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people with the land on which Hume City is now situated, the impact of colonisation on all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including dispossession of culture and country, and the strength and perseverance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Wherever possible, Councillors and officers will read these statements with this historical context in mind.
- 5.3.4 The following text can be read, although this wording is a guide only and Councillors and officers are encouraged to personalise their Acknowledgements based on the context of the event or gathering:

"I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Country for which the members and Elders of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and their ancestors have been Owners for many thousands of years. The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, which includes existing family members of the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan, are the Traditional Owners of this land. I would like to pay respect to the existing family members of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung. I would like to pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and Elders from other communities who may be here today".

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- 5.3.5 For less formal occasions where Council would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the following statement may be read (again, personalisation is encouraged):

“I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung land. The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people including the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan are the first and original people of this land. I would like to pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and Elders from other communities who may be here today.”

5.4 NAMING AND SIGNAGE

- 5.4.1 Naming at Hume will be undertaken in accordance with Hume’s Place Names Policy and in consultation with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.
- 5.4.2 There will be acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as part of any municipal Gateway treatments (i.e. signage at the entry to suburbs with the municipality).
- 5.4.3 Council will display a plaque on the outside of all Council-owned facilities acknowledging the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the land.
- 5.4.4 Council will display wording described in 5.3.5 inside meeting rooms to assist people in correctly acknowledging the Traditional Owners.
- 5.4.5 Other public displays acknowledging Hume City Council support for reconciliation will be displayed in the foyers of Council buildings. Council will display *Wominjeka* (meaning “welcome” in the Woi-wurrung language) in customer service and community facility foyers and on Council buildings where “welcome” is displayed in other languages.
- 5.4.6 In addition, Council will exhibit the formal apology made on 13th February 2008 by the then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd in the customer service foyer at the Broadmeadows office.
- 5.4.7 Council will acknowledge Hume’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on strategies, action plans and publications in a prominent location such as on or inside the front cover of each document. The Acknowledgement will include the following statement as a minimum:

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“Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, as the Traditional Owners of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ living cultures as a vital part of Australia’s identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders past, present and future”.

5.4.8 On Council’s email signature block, the following statement will be included, along with Australian, Aboriginal, and Torres Strait flags:
“Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, as the Traditional Owners of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ living cultures as a vital part of Australia’s identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders past, present and future”.

5.4.9 On other Council written documentation such as rates notice the following statement will be included at the bottom of the page:

“Hume City Council acknowledges the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung as the Traditional Owners of this land.”

6 Definitions and Abbreviations

- 6.1 **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples:** A term that encompasses the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities. While there are many terms that may be considered appropriate by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members such as ‘First Nations’ and ‘First Nations peoples’, ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ is preferred terminology recommended by Hume’s Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.
- 6.2 **Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung:** The people recognised as the Traditional Owners of the land now known as Hume city. The territory of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung lies within the inner city of Melbourne and extends north of the Great Dividing Ranges, east to Mt Baw Baw, south to Mordialloc Creek and west to Werribee River.

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- 6.3 **Gunung-Willam-Balluk:** The Gunung-Willam-Balluk are one of the clans of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people. Community members affiliated with the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan have had a strong presence in the Hume community over many years, and some descendents are still living in the municipality today.
- 6.4 **Function/Event:** Notable public occurrences, which showcase Hume City Council, its Councillors, staff and community, including the Statutory Meeting of Council, festivals and official openings and launches.
- 6.5 **Meetings:** meetings have a pre-defined agenda, invitees and authority to make decisions or assign actions for future work. Informal conversations, or one-on-one sessions are not defined as 'meetings'.

7 Related Documents.

- 7.1 Hume Council Plan 2025-2029
- 7.2 Hume City Council Social Justice Charter
- 7.3 Hume Reconciliation Action Plan 2026-2028
- 7.4 Hume Community Engagement Framework
- 7.5 Hume Place Names Policy

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