

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	21 September 2020
Date for Review	September 2025
Responsible Officer	Manager Community Strengthening
Department	Community Strengthening

POLICY STATEMENT

Hume City Council recognises:

- The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the traditional custodians of the land now known as Hume City – their Elders past, present, and emerging.
- All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living in Hume City.
- The strength, resilience and creativity of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.
- 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 people as a result of this; the impact of racism on this trauma—and the ways in which these forces combine to reinforce entrenched disadvantage, poor health outcomes, increased contact with the justice system and economic disadvantage.
- 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.
- Council's role in healing and building positive relationships between Council and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as well as educating the broader public about the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, cultures and history.
- Council's role in the broader process of truth telling, addressing social and economic disadvantage and working towards reconciliation.

1 PURPOSE

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

- 1.1.1 The Policy aligns with Council's Hume Horizons 2040 community plan in its commitment to creating:
- 1.1.2 A culturally vibrant and connected community through the recognition of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities more broadly.
- 1.1.3 A healthy and safe community by modelling respectful behaviour and contributing to truth telling and reconciliation.
- 1.1.4 A well-governed and engaged community by encouraging participation and inclusion in Council recognition processes and activities.

1.2 The Policy articulates Council's commitment to the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a way of:

- 1.2.1 Building stronger connections between Council and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities leading to a more socially connected community.
- 1.2.2 Promoting truth telling and healing.
- 1.2.3 Encouraging respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, cultures and histories within Council and in the broader community.

2 SCOPE

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2.1 This policy provides guidance on:

- 2.1.1 The display of the Aboriginal flag along with the Australian and Council flag.
- 2.1.2 The formal Acknowledgement of the Traditional Custodians of the land now known as Hume City and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities at Council events, meetings and functions.
- 2.1.3 The display of symbols of recognition of the Traditional Custodians of the land now known as Hume City and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities at municipal gateways and on Council owned facilities.
- 2.1.4 The engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and representative organisations in the naming of roads, buildings, and suburbs.
- 2.1.5 The wording to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land now known as Hume City and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Council's strategies, action plans and rates notices.

3 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 In the implementation of this Policy, Council will regularly seek guidance from its Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAPWG) and the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation as to appropriate recognition to ensure practices continue to be culturally appropriate and meet community expectations.

3.2 FLAGS

- 3.2.1 Council will, as part of its commitment to recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of this country fly daily from the left, the Australian flag, Aboriginal flag and Council flag, in the Civic Plaza, Broadmeadows and outside Craigieburn and Sunbury Customer Service Centres. In addition, the Aboriginal flag will be displayed in the Hume City Council Meeting Chambers alongside the Australian and Hume flags.
- 3.2.2 In accordance with 3.1 Council will consider additional sites for the display of appropriate flags on the suggestion of the RAPWG and / or the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.
- 3.2.3 Council will acknowledge National Sorry Day on the 26 May each year by flying from left to right the Australian flag at full mast and the Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Islander flag at half-mast.
- 3.2.4 Council will fly from left to right the Australian flag, the Aboriginal flag and the Torres Strait Islander flag during Reconciliation Week (27 – 3 June) and National and Victorian NAIDOC Week(s) (1st week of July), and on the Anniversary of the National Apology (13 February) each year.

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3.3 ACKNOWLEDGMENT

3.3.1 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.

3.3.2 Where an Elder of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung is unavailable to present a Welcome to Country an Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners will be read.

3.3.3 Acknowledgments of Traditional Owners reflect the longstanding connection of 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 contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Wherever possible, Councillors and officers will read these statements with this historical context in mind.

3.3.4 The following text will be read:

"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 forebears have been custodians for many thousands of years. The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, which includes the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan, are the Traditional Custodians of this land. I would like to pay respect to the existing family members of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung. I would also like to pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today".

3.3.5 For less formal occasions where Council would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians, the following statement may be read:

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

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3.4 NAMING AND SIGNAGE

- 3.4.1** In accordance with any applicable legislation, regulations, rules including the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria- Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2016, and applicable Council policies, Council will actively engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities including Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, the RAPWG and broader Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members in the naming of places.
- 3.4.2** There will be acknowledgement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as part of any municipal Gateway treatments (ie. signage at the entry to suburbs with the municipality).
- 3.4.3** Council will display a plaque on all Council owned facilities acknowledging the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung as the Traditional Custodians of the land.
- 3.4.4** 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. 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.
- 3.4.5** Council will acknowledge Hume’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on strategies, action plans and publications in a prominent location such as on or inside the front cover of each document developed after May 2016. The Acknowledgement will include the following statement:
- 3.4.6** “Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, as the Traditional Custodians 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”.
- 3.4.7** 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 of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung as the Traditional Custodians of this land.”

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4 DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

4.1 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 considered appropriate by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members including ‘First Nations’ and ‘First Nations peoples’, ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ is preferred terminology recommended by Hume’s Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.

4.2 Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung: The people recognised as the Traditional Owners of the land now known as Hume. 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, and south to Mordialloc Creek and west to Werribee River. The Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung are a tribe composed of a number of different clans that are the traditional owners of separate pieces of land or estates. Although they are distinct in this way, the clans of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung tribe share many things in common. Of prime importance is their collective identity as Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung tribesmen and tribeswomen.

4.3 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.

4.4 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.

5 RELATED DOCUMENTS

5.1 Hume Horizons 2040

5.2 Hume City Council Social Justice Charter.

5.3 Hume Reconciliation Action Plan 2018-2022 and Implementation Plan 2020- 2022.

5.4 Hume Community Engagement Framework

5.5 Hume Place Names Policy.

Date Adopted	May 2010
Date Re-Adopted	21 September 2020
Review Date	1 September 2025

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