



GUIDELINES ON STREET AND BUILDING NAMING AND NUMBERING IN THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER

INTRODUCTION

The Council is responsible for street/building naming and numbering under Part II of the London Building Act 1939. A brief summary of the principal functions is given below:-

- **Section 5** of the Act allows an intended name of a road to be proposed to the Council and if the Council objects to that name, it must do so within one month. In practice, the Council objects to all names initially to allow it time to place a public notice about the name and consult the postal and emergency services and anyone else who may be affected by the name. Where a name is proposed it is also better to propose two alternatives, and any name is more likely to be approved if it complies with these guidelines. However, **Section 6** of the Act allows the Council to assign any name that it thinks fit, after carrying out the consultations outlined above. If there is a difference between the Council's choice and the proposers, the decision on the name will be referred to the Town Planning (Applications) Sub-Committee. Where the consultation process throws up a substantive objection to a name, the matter is again referred to the Sub-Committee;
- **Section 11** allows the Council to assign numbers and/or names to buildings;

The Council produces application forms to permit people to make applications under the above sections and charges an application fee to recover its costs. Application forms and the current fees may be obtained from the Council's Street Naming and Numbering Officer or One Stop Services. Any application made is more likely to be successful if it meets the following guidelines. These guidelines are not statutory requirements but policy guidance, whose implementation over many years by the City Council and other London boroughs, has proved effective in assisting in the speedy identification of streets and buildings. In appropriate circumstances, the Council may vary this guidance and this would normally be done by the Director of Environment and Planning. Decisions involving substantial changes to the guidance would be reported to the Sub-Committee.

1. NAMING OF STREETS AND BUILDINGS:

- (i) New street names should not duplicate any similar name already in use in the borough or neighbouring boroughs. A variation in the terminal word, i.e. 'street', 'road', 'avenue', etc. will not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a name.

- (ii) Street names should not be difficult to pronounce or awkward to spell. In general, words of more than three syllables should be avoided and this precludes the use of two words, except in special cases.
- (iii) Subsidiary names, such as a row of buildings within an already named road being called '.....Terrace' should only be used for roads of short length.
- (iv) All new street names should end with one of the following suffixes:-

Street		for any thoroughfare
Road	)	for any thoroughfare
Way	)	for major roads
Avenue	)	for residential roads
Drive	)	ditto
Grove	)	ditto
Lane	)	ditto
Gardens	)	ditto (subject to there being no confusion with any local open space)
Place	)	ditto
Crescent	-	for a crescent-shaped road
Close	-	for a cul-de-sac only
Square	-	for a square only
Hill	-	for a hillside road only
Circus	-	for a large roundabout
Terrace	-	for a terrace of houses (provided it is not a subsidiary name)
Vale	)	for residential roads in appropriate circumstances
Dene	)	ditto
Rise	)	ditto
Mead	)	ditto
Row	)	ditto
Wharf	)	ditto
Mews	)	ditto

Non acceptable suffixes:-

End, Court, Cross, Side, View, Walk, Park, Meadow.
(All these words can, of course, be incorporated in a street name provided it terminates with an appropriate suffix [e.g. Mile End Road]).

Exceptions - single or dual names without suffixes in appropriate places (e.g. Broadway - for major roads only).

- (v) All new pedestrian ways should end with one of the following suffixes:-

Walk
Path
Way

- (vi) No street or building name to start with 'The'.
(vii) All new building names should end with one of the following suffixes:-

Lodge		residential only
House		ditto
Court	-	ditto
Apartments		ditto
Mansions		ditto
Point	-	high block residential only
Tower	-	high block offices or residential
Heights		ditto

- (viii) For private houses it is sufficient that the name should not repeat the name of the road or that of any other house or building in the area.
- (ix) The use of North, East, South or West (as in 'Alfred Road North' and 'Alfred Road South' 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. In such cases half should be renamed.
- (x) Avoid having two phonetically similar names within a postal area and, if possible, within the borough, e.g. 'Alfred Road' and 'Alfred Close' or 'Churchill Road' and 'Birch Hill Road'.
- (xi) New names, whether for the purposes of naming a new street or for the renaming of an existing street, should demonstrate clear historical or local links to the area in which the street is

situated and supporting information must be provided. See also section 3 below. In seeking approval for any name, regard must still be had to that part of the policy that seeks to avoid duplication of names.

2. THE NUMBERING OF BUILDINGS:

- (i) A new street should be numbered with even numbers on one side and odd numbers on the other, except that for a cul-de-sac consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction is preferred.
- (ii) Private garages and similar buildings used only for housing cars, etc., should not be numbered.
- (iii) There should be no sanction given for the avoidance of certain numbers on grounds of superstition e.g. 13 or 4. These numbers should be used in proper sequence in the street.
- (iv) Buildings (including those on corner sites) are numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is to be found and the manipulation of numbering in order to secure a 'prestige' address or to avoid an address which is thought to have undesired associations should not be sanctioned.
- (v) If a building has entrances in more than one street, but it is a multi-occupied building and each entrance leads to a separate occupier, then each entrance should be numbered in the appropriate road. Exceptions may be made, depending on the circumstances, for a house divided into flats.
- (vi) A named building may not have more than one number in one street.
- (vii) In residential buildings (e.g. blocks of flats) it is usual to give a street number to each block where the block is up to six storeys in height. When the block exceeds this height or there are not sufficient numbers available because of existing developments, it should be given a name and a number in the street. The numbering of flats within a named or numbered building is outside the scope of this Council's powers, but developers may be advised that on each floor the numbering should be in a clockwise direction where this is possible, or alternatively to consult the local District Postmaster. When flats are numbered internally they should be numbered, not lettered (e.g. Flat 2, 21 Smith Street, not Flat A, 21 Smith Street and not 21A Smith Street which might already be used by an adjoining infill building).

- (viii) The 1939 Act permits the use of numbers followed by letters or fractions (Section 11(2)). These are needed, for instance, when one large old house in a road is demolished and replaced by, say, four smaller houses. To include the new houses in the numbering sequence would involve renumbering all the higher numbered houses on that side of the road. If a considerable number of other houses would be affected, then to avoid this, each new house should be given the number of the old house with either A, B, C or D added. However, although fractions are permitted in the Act, the Post Office nearly always object to their use.

3. RENAMING OR RENUMBERING OF STREETS AND BUILDINGS

- (i) Renaming existing streets is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the occupiers, Post Office or Emergency Services, etc. The same applies to the wholesale renumbering of existing buildings in a street.
- (ii) New names, whether for the purposes of naming a new street or for the renaming of an existing street, should demonstrate clear historical and local links to the area in which the street is situated and supporting information must be provided. In seeking approval for any name, regard must still be had to that part of the policy that seeks to avoid duplication of names.

Approved by Council on 31 March 1998