

## **STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING GUIDANCE NOTE**

### **ADVICE ON NAMING AND NUMBERING OF STREETS AND BUILDINGS**

1. Introduction and Statutory Context
2. The Procedure
3. When to Apply — Guidance for Applicants
4. Street Naming Conventions
5. Building Numbering and/or Naming Conventions
6. The Display of Names and Numbers
7. National Streets Gazetteer and National Land and Property Gazetteer
9. Enforcement Procedures
10. Further information and advice

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND STATUTORY CONEXT

The Isle of Wight Council is the Street Naming and Numbering (SNN) authority but has delegated this function to Ringway Island Roads Ltd (RIR) to carry out on its behalf under a PFI Agreement commencing April 2013. All proposals for new street names/changes and name/numbering of buildings in the district must, by law, be sent to RIR for approval prior to being brought into use. RIR also ensure that the authorised name and number is displayed in an appropriate manner.

There are two principal pieces of legislation that apply to the Naming and Numbering of Streets and Buildings:

- Town Improvement Clause Act 1847; Sections 64 & 65
- Public Health Act 1925; Section 17

The SNN function includes for the enforcement of:

- erection of street name plates by applicant(s)/developer(s) in accordance with an approved specification as defined in: *Department of Transport: Circular 3/93 Roads Appendix A*; and,
- ensuring that the numbers/names of buildings are displayed by the developer(s)/ owner(s) in accordance with the official address allocated by this office.

The purpose of this guidance note is to provide advice to developers and building occupiers on the naming and numbering of streets and buildings.

The objective of the Street Naming and Numbering Service is to provide a unique and unambiguous address for every property in the district, for the purposes of:

- Record keeping, e.g. legal transactions, taxation;
- Efficient delivery of post by Royal Mail and delivery services;
- Timely response/location by the emergency services; and
- Help in enabling e-government initiatives.

The guidelines are relevant both to new developments, and the renaming/renumbering of existing streets and buildings. RIR will require a submission for all new developments. The renaming/renumbering of existing streets and buildings is normally only considered when changes occur which give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the occupiers, Post Services, or emergency services.

These guidance notes are supported by the National Street Name and Numbering Code of Practice published by GeoPlace LLP: <https://www.snn.geoplace.co.uk/>

## **2. THE PROCEDURE**

On receipt of an application for a new street/building name, RIR undergo checks to ensure that the proposal:

- does not duplicate existing names (and numbers), and
- is in accordance with general naming conventions, street naming conventions, and building naming and numbering conventions (as set out below).

For requests that involve the naming of streets or buildings, RIR would consult the following authorities:

- Royal Mail
- Parish Councils
- Other relevant Council Departments.

Under normal circumstances RIR will not consult in instances where the application is solely for the numbering/naming of a single building. However, there are occasionally instances (for example cases of renumbering or where locations of main entrances are changed from one street to another) where RIR would wish to consult to ensure that no problems would subsequently arise.

If any of the above services object to the name(s) proposed, then the applicant is invited to submit alternatives.

The Public Health Act 1925 Section 17 states that the urban authority has one month to object to street name suggestions. Where the urban authority serves a notice of objection under this section, the person proposing to name the street may, within 21 days after the service of the notice, appeal against the objection to a petty sessional court.

On completion of the process Royal Mail and all statutory undertakers i.e. electricity, gas, water and telephone together with the emergency services, Land Registry, Electoral Registration, Council Tax, etc. are then advised of the new address(es).

## **3. WHEN TO APPLY - GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS**

It should be noted that the procedure can be a lengthy one. It is therefore advisable to consult RIR at the earliest possible stage of a proposal, preferably as soon after building work commences, and ideally before an unofficial name has been marketed or legal documentation drafted.

Many legal transactions associated with properties are withheld until they can be identified by an official address and utility suppliers will not normally connect their services, until such time as the premises have been given a formal postal address. Occupants of non-registered addresses may experience issues obtaining credit and accessing services from third party providers.

If an application is submitted to RIR at a late stage and is subsequently rejected, numerous problems can arise, especially if purchasers have bought properties marketed under an unapproved name.

It is therefore advisable to be cautious in the use of names for marketing purposes if the name has not been authorised. It should be pointed out any literature distributed to prospective purchasers, for example, that marketing names are subject to approval and thus to possible change.

### **3.1 APPLICATION NOTES**

All requests to address a property, or amend an existing address, should be made by the owner/developer. An application can be submitted on behalf of an owner where a letter of consent is provided.

All applications for new addresses, or where a change of use has occurred, will be checked against the planning database and will be rejected if the correct planning consents have NOT been obtained. Issuing of an address does not serve as confirmation that any building or structure is authorised under Planning legislation.

## **4. STREET NAMING CONVENTIONS**

Naming of new streets is carried out under Section 17 Public Health Act 1925.

Suggestions for street names may be submitted by the developer for consideration.

To prevent duplicate new street names which are close together, and may conflict with those in adjoining towns, Royal Mail will be consulted.

The emergency services prefer this method for naming new streets as they then know there is only one street with that name within the area.

**Developers or interested parties** wishing to consult RIR with suggestions for street names should contact the **SNN Technician** in the first instance on 01983 828500 or email [developmentcontrol@islandroads.com](mailto:developmentcontrol@islandroads.com)

When a new housing development is built, the responsibility for naming new streets rests with RIR who have the authority for street naming and the following considerations will be assessed:

- The name should have a proven historical connection to the land intended for development.
- If no suitable historical name can be found to the land then adjacent areas may be utilized.
- The name will not be a persons' name unless there is a historical connection to the land intended for development and the person must be deceased.

- The name will not be the same, similar to, duplicate or phonetically sound similar to an existing street in the post town area, for example: Alfred Road and Alfred Close; or Churchill Road and Birchill Road.
- Proposed names cannot be construed to be used for advertising or commercial gain for example named after the developer's company name.
- The name does not cause spelling or pronunciation problems.
- Words of more than three syllables should be avoided and precludes the use of two words except in special cases.
- Avoid aesthetically unsuitable names such as Gaswork Road, Tip House, Coalpit Lane, or names capable of deliberate misinterpretation like Hoare Road, Typple Avenue, Quare Street, etc.
- Avoid the prefix of 'The' or 'A' for naming of streets or buildings (may cause issues for emergency services when taking calls or locating properties).
- Subsidiary names (i.e. a row of buildings within an already named road being called 'Terrace') should not be used.
- Names should not contain a number, either in numerical or written format.
- If the development contains a new network of streets a theme may be chosen, taking care not to repeat the theme elsewhere.

A comprehensive list of appropriate street name suffixes is included at in the National SNN Code of Practice: [List of suffixes for street names](#).

Suffixes that require careful consideration, as they may give a false impression of location are:

- End, Court, Cross, Side, View, Wharf, Walk, Park, Meadow - these words can be incorporated in a street name provided it terminates with an appropriate suffix (i.e. Mile End Road.)

Exceptions: Single or dual names without suffixes in appropriate places (i.e. Broadway – for Major roads only).

All new pedestrian ways should end in with one of the following suffixes:

- Walk
- Path
- Way

The use of the North, South, East or West (as in Alfred Road North and Alfred Road South) is generally not acceptable when the street is in two separate parts with no vehicular access between the two. In such a case one half should be completely renamed.

## **5. BUILDING NUMBERING AND/OR NAMING CONVENTIONS**

### **5.1 Postal Numbering**

Postal numbering is carried out under Sections 64 & 65 of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847

RIR is responsible for the numbering of new properties. Numbers are allocated to enable easy and rapid location of buildings by both routine and emergency callers, on the following basis:

- RIR would, in normal circumstances, issue a house number. However, on occasion, this is not practical, and a house name would be issued.
- Where properties have a name and no number, RIR does have the power to create numbering schemes and make residents use house numbers.
- Emergency services prefer a numbering system.
- Buildings should be numbered to the street which provides access to the entrance to the property.

Any change of number/name of a property can only be authorised by RIR.

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES MUST A DEVELOPER ALLOCATE NUMBERING AS PART OF THEIR MARKETING STRATEGY, IT CAN ONLY BE RINGWAY ISLAND ROADS WHO ISSUE THE FORMAL POSTAL NUMBER.**

Numbering sequences can be attributed in many different ways but the most popular are:

- Individual properties should always be numbered if possible.
- As you enter a development, numbers should be – odds on left, evens on right.
- Through roads and longer cul-de-sac numbering ascends from the main access for the street/from the junction with a higher category street/away from the town centre.
- For a small development/cul-de-sac (with no future potential for expansion), they can be numbered consecutively, clockwise.
- If one or more dwellings are built between two other already numbered dwellings, a suffix of “a”, “b”, “c”, etc., is added to the number.
- Where flats and units have individual doors to a street, they shall be given individual numbers to the street where possible.
- Where a property is sub-divided with a shared entrance (block of flats/apartments) the block may be given a NAME as well as a number with each individual unit numbered consecutively. When considering a name for the block, the street naming conventions are used (see Section 4).
- All new building/block names should end with an appropriate suffix – refer: [List of building name suffixes](#).
- Allocation of internal Flat numbers is based on a convention that starts the numbering at the main entrance or access point of each floor and circulate in a clockwise direction. Developers should not allocate Flat numbers, until these have been confirmed by SNN.
- There should be no sanction given to the avoidance of any numbers, (i.e. 7, 13) and a proper sequence should be maintained.

## 5.2 House Names

The allocation of a house name may be permitted. However, where a numbering scheme is in place for the street, a property name cannot replace the number, it may be added as an 'alias' only. There is no charge to give your house an alias, however, proof of ownership is required. RIR can liaise with Royal Mail to add an alias.

**Note:** *An alias does not form part of the official address and does not need to be recorded with Land Registry. House owners may erect a name plaque and use the name in correspondence but must display the official number. It is the number that the emergency services will use to locate the property. Whilst Royal Mail record aliases on their website, it should be noted that not all third parties choose to purchase this layer of data – some may only detail the official numbered address on their database.*

The official number should always be displayed on the property, and quoted within an address on all correspondence, for example:

Property Alias Name  
99 Any Street  
ANY TOWN  
Post code

When considering a name for your property contact the SNN Technician at RIR to find out if the preferred name is already in use in the immediate area.

## 5.3 Post Code

Having established the address up to the postal town, RIR shall then consult with Royal Mail, which is responsible for allocation of the full postcode. Upon receipt of the postcode confirmation, we inform the developer/householder/owner as appropriate.

In the case of developments in existing streets, where no new street name is required, or in existing streets where there are no street numbers, the owner in consultation with RIR may be allowed to choose the house name.

## 6. THE DISPLAY OF NAMES AND NUMBERS

The regulations made require numbers and names to be displayed in an appropriate manner. This was introduced to ensure that buildings are clearly identified for the convenience of the public, and in order that the emergency services may attend and react efficiently when called to an accident or other incident.

The following guidelines apply:

1. Every number or name, or number and name, of any building in any street, way, place, row of houses or block shall be marked and securely attached:

- a) On the building, the entrance gate, boundary wall or fence immediately adjacent to the gate or entrance of such a building, or in such other position as to be clearly visible from the street or way in which the building is situated.
  - b) With numerals or lettering of such colour as to contrast with the background against which they are displayed.
  - c) With numerals or letters of sufficient size to render them clearly visible from the street or way in which the building is situated.
  - d) In durable, non-absorbent material, which expression shall be deemed to include paint.
2. Where the number or name, or number and name, is marked on the building to which it relates, such number or name, or number and name, shall be not more than 6.0 meters above the level of the ground.
  3. Where the number or name, or number and name, is marked in a position other than on the building on which it relates, such number or name, or number and name, shall be not more than 2.44 metres or less than 0.75 metres above the ground.
  4. The numerals of which any number is composed shall be Arabic in character. Of particular concern to Island Roads is the number of shops not adequately displaying the appropriate name and number this will need adequate policing to maintain standards. In addition to these guidelines, developers and building owners should be aware that planning permission may be required in the following instances:

Listed buildings: if the proposed display would affect the special character of the building. Even relatively small-scale displays or alterations may require listed building consent.

Advertisement Control: it is possible that a display may be deemed to be a sign requiring consent under the Town and Country Planning (control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.

If you are in doubt about the display of the name/number you are advised to consult the Regulations and contact the Isle of Wight Council's Planning Department ( [www.iwight.com](http://www.iwight.com) ) for further advice.

## **7. NATIONAL STREET GAZETTEER (NSG), AND NATIONAL LAND AND PROPERTY GAZETTEER (NLPG)**

RIR is responsible for maintaining information relating to the authority in both the National Street Gazetteer (NSG), and National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG). Both the NSG and NLPG will be updated to include relevant authorisations made by the Council for both street naming and building naming/numbering. The entries to the NSG and NLPG will be made in accordance with British Standard 7666; "Spatial data-sets for geographical



referencing". The relevant NLPG reference is included in the authorisation. It is important to maintain this standard and so attention to detail with regards to spelling etc. is of paramount importance.

## **8. ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES**

The Acts, in appropriate circumstances, allows RIR to affix approved street numbers to buildings and to recover costs incurred. In addition, the provisions of the Act result in offences being committed when owners or occupiers remove, cover or obliterate street numbers.

The normal RIR approach is to encourage occupiers to display the correct name/number in an appropriate manner. Where it is evident that failure to do so could result in failure of postal delivery services or emergency services to identify adequately the premises, then RIR will pursue enforcement action.

## **9. FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE**

Further information, advice and submissions for authorisation can be made to:

Highways Development Control  
Ringway Island Roads Ltd  
St. Christopher House  
42 Daish Way  
NEWPORT  
PO30 1XJ

Web: [Island Roads | Street Naming and Numbering](#)

Telephone: (01983) 828500

Email: [developmentcontrol@islandroads.com](mailto:developmentcontrol@islandroads.com)

### **References:**

Town Improvement Clause Act 1847; Section 64 & 65  
Public Health Act 1925; Section 17