



City of Westminster

Guidelines on Street & Building Naming and Numbering



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1 INTRODUCTION

Westminster City Council is responsible for naming and numbering of new and existing streets and buildings under Part II of the London Building (Amendment) Act 1939. Key sections of the Act are as follows:

- **Section 5** requires notice to be given to the Council of a proposed street name and gives a power to object to this name.
- **Section 6** allows the Council to assign any name to a street that it thinks fit, after carrying out consultations.
- **Section 11** allows the Council to assign numbers and/or names to buildings.

It is important that every address is unique and unambiguous, so that the Emergency Services can find it quickly and mail is delivered correctly. A street naming and numbering application must be made to name or number a new development, sub-divide an existing property, or change the name or number(s) of an existing property or development.

These guidelines have been prepared to assist developers and building owners on the naming and numbering of streets and buildings in Westminster. These are not statutory requirements but policy guidance, whose implementation over many years by the Council and other London boroughs, has proved effective in assisting in the speedy identification of streets and buildings. They were first approved on 31 March 1998. They were updated and approved by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development on 17 October 2022.¹

Find out more information on the application process at Appendix A and see application forms and information on fees on the Westminster website at - <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/roads-and-highways/street-naming-and-numbering>.

¹ In appropriate circumstances, the Council may vary this guidance - this would normally be done by the Director of Town Planning and Building Control but decisions involving substantial changes to the guidance will be reported to the Cabinet Member with responsibility for planning.

2. GUIDELINES FOR NAMING OF STREETS AND BUILDINGS:

When suggesting a name for a new street or building, you should follow the guidance set out below.

NEW STREET NAMES

- New street names should not duplicate any similar name already in use in Westminster or in neighbouring boroughs. A variation in the suffix, i.e. 'street', 'road', 'avenue', etc. will not be sufficient reason to duplicate a name. You should avoid having two phonetically similar names within a postal area and, if possible, within the City, e.g. 'Alfred Road' and 'Alfred Close' or 'Churchill Road' and 'Birch Hill Road'.
- In general, words of more than three syllables should be avoided. This precludes the use of two words, except in special cases.
- 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.
- 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. When the road is in two separate parts with no vehicular access between the two, one half should be renamed.

New street names should end with one of the following suffixes:

Street	for any thoroughfare
Road	for any thoroughfare
Way	for major roads
Avenue, Drive, Grove, Lane, Place	for residential roads
Gardens	for residential roads (subject to there being no confusion with any local open space)
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, Dene, Rise, Mead, Row, Wharf, Mews	for residential roads in appropriate circumstances

The following suffixes are not acceptable: -End, Court, Cross, Side, View, Wal, Park, Meadow (All these words can 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).

All new **pedestrian ways** should end with one of the following suffixes: - **Walk, Path, Way.**

NEW BUILDING NAMES

New building names should usually end with one of the following suffixes:

Building, House	any
Lodge, Court, Apartments, Mansions	residential only
Point	high block residential only
Tower, Heights	high block offices or residential

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.

FURTHER GUIDELINES ON CHOICE OF NAMES

- (i) New names, whether for the purposes of naming a new street or for the renaming of an existing street, should usually have historical and/or local links to the area in which the street is situated. Supporting information must be provided to demonstrate this with your application. You can contact our [archives centre](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-community/westminster-archives)² for help in researching names with historical links to Westminster. When seeking approval for any name, you must still seek to avoid duplication of names, also following guidance above.
- (ii) New names should not include words having offensive connotations for the general public or a particular community or be capable of deliberate misinterpretation or double meaning.
- (iii) The use of a name, which relates to people either living or deceased, should be avoided if possible. In general, in order to avoid causing offence, no street shall be named after any living person.
- (iv) For applications to name a street after a deceased person, written permission must be obtained from the person's family or estate administrators and the individual in question should usually have been dead for a minimum of 10 years.
- (v) Permission must be obtained for the use of any street name with a 'Royal' connotation e.g., Royal, Queen, Duke, Princess, Prince, etc. Any applications should be made by the senior officer of the organisation, e.g. Chairman, President, Chief Executive, (Vice) Chancellor, Honorary Secretary. Applications by email are preferred. The application and attachments should be emailed to the Royal Names Team, Cabinet Office: RoyalNames@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

² <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-community/westminster-archives>

3. GUIDELINES FOR THE NUMBERING OF NEW STREETS & BUILDINGS

- A new street should be numbered with even numbers on one side and odd numbers on the other, except for a cul-de-sac where consecutive numbering in a clockwise direction is preferred.
- Private garages and similar buildings used only for housing cars etc., should not be numbered.
- Numbers should be used in proper sequence in the street. The avoidance of certain numbers, e.g. 13 or 4 on grounds of superstition, will not be permitted.
- Buildings (including those on corner sites) are numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is to be found. Manipulation of numbering to secure a 'prestige' address or to avoid an address which is thought to have undesired associations will not be permitted.
- 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.
- A named building may not have more than one number in one street.
- 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 should be in a clockwise direction where this is possible.
- When flats are numbered internally, the preferred option is for them to 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). In certain circumstances, letters and floor descriptions for flats are acceptable where they are already in use.
- The 1939 Act permits the use of numbers followed by letters or fractions (Section 11(2)). These are needed, for example, when one large old house in a road is demolished and replaced by 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.

4. RENAMING AND RENUMBERING OF EXISTING STREETS AND BUILDINGS

Renaming existing streets should normally be avoided unless either changes give rise (or are likely to give rise) to problems for the occupiers, Post Office or Emergency Services, etc. or changes can be otherwise justified, will follow the guidelines set out above and public safety objectives are not put at risk. The same applies to the wholesale renumbering of existing buildings in a street. Supporting information setting out the justification and demonstrating you have followed the above guidelines on naming and numbering must be provided with your application.

Further information

For further information contact our Street Naming and Numbering team -
<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/roads-and-highways/contact-street-naming-and-numbering-team>

Appendix A: How to make your Street or Building Naming and Numbering application

We advise you to contact us at the earliest stage of a proposal, preferably when building works commence, and before a name has been marketed. The application form can be downloaded on our website and can be submitted at <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/roads-and-highways/street-naming-and-numbering>.

You should provide the following information with your application:

- ✓ **Completed Application Form**
- ✓ **A site plan/ OS map with the site outlined in red and a schedule of plots/flats/floor layout. A plan showing locations/layout of buildings/pathways/blocks/ retail units.**
- ✓ **Contact details for the applicant and site owner (including confirmation of permission by the property owner to make an application).**
- ✓ **An explanation and supporting information on the proposal, including the present address details. If the application includes a building or street name, an explanation of the origins of the name must be included and demonstrate how you have complied with these guidelines. You should also provide two alternative name proposals as we may receive objections following consultation and this will speed up the process.**
- ✓ **Details of the relevant planning permission (where appropriate).**
- ✓ **Correct payment (see application form for details of fees).**

You can find an overview of the application process at Appendix B. If you have any queries, you can **contact our Street Naming and Numbering team using our web form** or email **snn@westminster.gov.uk**.

Appendix B – The Street Naming and Numbering Application Process

The street naming and numbering application process will take at least one month and includes a 28 day consultation period. In making our decision, we follow the process set out below –



Appendix C: Display of Street and Building Names and Numbers

Please make sure that the street number and building name (if applicable) are clearly displayed on the building - this is a condition of the London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939.

The provision of replacement and/or new nameplates is a requirement of Part II, paragraph 8 of the London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939. Replacement and/or new nameplates must be installed according to the requirements of the London County Council Street Naming Regulations 1952, as follows:

- Nameplates should be fixed within 10 feet of every street corner (excluding the width of the public footway) on both sides of each street and may be placed on part of a building or structure.
- Where installed on a building, nameplates should be installed at a height of between 2.5 and 3.5 metres above ground level for best visibility.
- On straight lengths of street without intersections, nameplates should be repeated at intervals of approximately 200 yards on alternate sides of the street.
- At "T" junctions, a nameplate should be placed directly opposite the side street.
- If the name of a street changes other than at a junction, both names should be displayed at the point of change indicating to which parts of the street the names refer.

In line with the regulations and to ensure consistency of street nameplates across the City, they must be supplied and fitted by the Council.

Further information

For further advice including the supply and fitting cost and to request the reprovision and/or introduction of new nameplates you should contact the Highways Inspector responsible for the management of the application site. Alternatively, you can contact Highways Operations: highwaysoperations@westminster.gov.uk.