

Street naming and numbering applications — guidance notes

Please read these notes carefully before making an application to name or number an existing or new building. Note that this document provides guidelines only and the Council reserves the right to vary the specific rules depending on the circumstances of individual applications.

You must complete an application form every time you need to apply for a new name or number for buildings or streets in Lambeth. Please submit an application form as soon as construction work starts on the new street or building. If you have any questions about the application form or would like additional copies, contact Street Naming and Numbering on Tel: 020 7926 2283, email StreetNN@lambeth.gov.uk or at Olive Morris House, 18 Brixton Hill, London, SW2 1RD.

You must include a site plan with each application indicating the location of the streets or buildings affected by the naming or numbering application. The plan should show the main external entrance to each property, clearly marked in a different colour to the rest of the plan. An application will not be processed unless a clear site plan is included.

Please note that no application will be considered without the written consent of all of the freeholders affected by the change of address.

General information about street naming and numbering

Lambeth Council has responsibility for assigning names to streets and buildings and numbers to buildings in the borough under powers granted by the following Acts of Parliament:

- **London Building Acts (Amendment) Act 1939 – Part II**
- **Local Government Act 1985 – (Schedule 8, 14[1])**

These powers give the Council the sole right to:

- name new streets and pathways (parks are excluded)
- name new buildings (licensed premises and theatres are excluded)
- rename existing streets and buildings
- decide on numbering and renumbering of buildings.

The name or number will be officially assigned when the Council issues an Order. This document becomes part of the legal description of the property. A copy of the Order will be sent to the owners of the properties concerned and this document should be attached to the Title Deeds of the property.

In addition, the Council sends regular updates to various organisations (including the Royal Mail and the emergency services) to keep them informed of any new or amended addresses in Lambeth. This alerts these organisations to update their records to include new addresses. It is important to follow this process to ensure that the Royal Mail database includes the new addresses before the new properties are occupied. This will minimise the risk of problems that can occur if the address is not recognised by organisations such as credit rating agencies, utility companies, couriers and others.

The following types of naming and numbering are **not** the responsibility of the Council:

- Naming for licensed premises, theatres and parks
- Unofficial naming for smaller individual private dwellings. Owners may wish to use an unofficial name for their house in addition to the assigned property street number. The Council will only take an interest in such cases if we become aware that the name is causing difficulties for organisations such as the Fire Brigade, the Royal Mail, etc.
- Internal numbering. This does not come under the Council's jurisdiction. For example, if an existing house is converted into three flats that share a common entrance door, the Council does not have a

responsibility over the internal flat numbers the developer chooses to use. However, you must inform us of how you plan to number any internal properties, using the application form, to ensure that the information held by the Council, Royal Mail, the emergency services and others is up to date. We ask that an application form be completed so that the Council has an authorised request form for the change from the owner.

Numbering of buildings

The Council's responsibility extends to all numbering or renumbering cases where external entrances are involved. For example, when a house is converted into flats with separate external entrance doors, the owner must apply to the Council to have street numbers officially assigned.

The Naming and Numbering Officer will consider the location and means of access to each external entrance, using the information on the application form and the plan provided by the applicant. Any numbering scheme suggested by the applicant will be considered, but the principles developed by the Council with the Royal Mail will almost always take precedence. In particular, please note the following points:

- Each self-contained property with a separate external door (flats, offices, shops or any other) will be allocated its own distinguishing number.
- The property number may include a letter suffix where properties have been subdivided (e.g. if number 3 is divided into two flats with separate external doors, the new flats would usually be numbered 3 and 3A).
- If several properties share an external door, the Council will assign an official number to this door, but has no jurisdiction over the internal numbering.
- The recommended method for addressing internal flats is 'Flat 1, Flat 2, Flat 3, etc...'. As a general rule flats should be numbered clockwise and starting from the ground floor working upwards.
- Under no circumstances will the number 13, or any other number, be excluded from new external numbering schemes.
- The address of a property depends on the location of the external entrance door. This means that some properties in the same building are sometimes addressed to different streets. For example, if as a result of redevelopment work, one or more of entrance doors to new sections of an existing building are on a different street, the new entrance will be assigned an address on the street where its entrance is located, regardless of the rest of the existing building's address.
- There will be no sanction given to the avoidance of any numbers i.e. 13, and a proper sequence should be maintained.

If all necessary information is provided with the application, an Order for numbering applications will usually be issued within three weeks of receipt of the application by the Naming and Numbering Officer.

Street and building naming applications

Lambeth Council has the sole right to decide on names for new streets and buildings in the borough provided that all interested parties are given one calendar month in which to register an objection (this consultation period is described below), and that those objections are fairly considered. Although it happens rarely, you should be aware that the Council may assign by Order any name that it thinks fit to any street or building, whether or not a name already exists for the street or building concerned.

An Order for naming applications will usually be issued around 7 weeks after names that meet the Council's guidelines are submitted to the Naming and Numbering Officer. This timescale assumes that no objections are received during the consultation period.

Rules for naming streets or buildings in Lambeth

The main rules that apply for naming streets and buildings in Lambeth are listed below. If you have any doubts about whether your proposed names meet the rules, contact the Naming and Numbering Officer.

Avoidance of duplicate names

This is one of the most important rules that applies to new street and building names. Any new name must not duplicate a name already in existence in the local area. Varying the name by using a different suffix (e.g. changing 'New Street' to 'New Road') is not acceptable. In nearly all cases, building names cannot be assigned if they are currently in use within the borough. In the case of new streets, the name cannot duplicate names currently in use in Lambeth, even if the other example of the name is located at the opposite end of the borough. The London Fire Brigade will be consulted with regard to building and street names to ensure there is no duplication within adjoining areas of neighbouring boroughs.

The main reason for the rule on duplication is to help prevent potential confusion for emergency services when responding to 999 calls. The London Fire Brigade will object to any names that breach this rule and Lambeth is unlikely to assign a name if an objection has been received from the emergency services.

To avoid delay, you should ask the Naming and Numbering Officer to check whether a name is duplicated **before** submitting your full application.

No single dwelling can be assigned an official name

The London Fire Brigade policy guidelines have put this in place to avoid confusion in locating named single dwellings in the event of emergencies.

Acceptable second words (or 'suffixes')

The London Fire Brigade's policy guidelines set out a number of rules that apply for the second word that it is possible to use after the name of a new street or building. Consideration must be given to the location and history of the street or building when deciding which 'suffix' to use to ensure that the name is suitable for the site. For example, a new building on an estate where most existing buildings are called 'xxxx House' should use the same suffix, rather than 'Apartments' or any of the other options below.

Standard street names

Street, Road: for any thoroughfare
Avenue, Drive, Grove, Lane, Place:
for residential roads only
Close, Mews: for cul-de-sacs only
Walk, Path or Way: for pedestrian ways only

Standard building names

House: for any building
Court, Apartments, Mansions, Lodge:
for residential buildings only
Tower, Heights: for high office or residential
buildings only
Point: for high residential buildings only

The list above is not exhaustive, so please contact the Street Naming and Numbering Officer if you would like to use a different word in your street or building name.

Historical connections

All suggested names must have a historical connection with the area in which the new street or building is located. This connection could be a name of a notable person who was born or lived in the area or could include words connected with how the land was used in the past. In most cases, the connection should be with Lambeth itself rather than with neighbouring boroughs, although exceptions may be made near to the borough boundary. Applicants dealing with sites in the north of Lambeth should note that the connection must be with the south side of the River Thames, rather than with Westminster or Chelsea.

We strongly recommend that you use the Lambeth Archives to research potential names. The resources available at the archives cover all aspects of the history of Lambeth and the Archives staff will be able to help you find the most useful sources. A paid research service may be available, if you are unable to attend the archives personally. Contact the archives for more information:

Lambeth Archives, Minet Library
52 Knatchbull Road, London, SE5 9QY
Phone: 020 7926 6076; Fax: 020 7926 6080
Email: archives@lambeth.gov.uk

To try to ensure that the information about historical connections is factually correct, we ask you to provide details of the sources you used in your research. Usually, this information will be checked for accuracy by the Lambeth Archives before the consultation process can begin.

Other naming rules

- Names should be kept reasonably short, easy to spell and easy to remember
- Names must not be facetious or derogatory
- Subsidiary names should not be used (for example, a row of buildings along a named street cannot be called 'xxxx Terrace')
- No street or building name to start with 'The'
- A named building may not have more than one number in a street

In exceptional circumstances names may be proposed that do not fit all of the criteria laid out in these guidelines. You **must** contact the Naming and Numbering Officer **before** selecting or proposing names under exceptional circumstances, to discuss the process you are considering using. Failure to do so could result in proposed names being rejected.

Consultation period

The Council has the sole right to decide on a name provided that we give interested parties **one calendar month** in which to register an objection, and that any objections received are fairly considered. We start the consultation process when we have received one or, preferably, several proposed names that fit the criteria set out in the guidelines above.

To minimise the risk that names are rejected at this stage, we advise you to contact the Naming and Numbering Officer **before** submitting the application form to check for any obvious reasons why the name might be rejected.

To ensure that local residents and other interested parties have an opportunity to raise objections to any suggested name, at least one calendar month before the Order is issued we do the following:

- send letters or emails to local councillors, the emergency services, the Royal Mail and several Council departments
- post notices on the street or streets near the site

We will attempt to resolve any objections received by liaising with the applicant and the objector during the consultation period. However, if the two parties are unable to reach agreement, the case will be referred to the relevant Area Committee for decision. If any objections are raised and upheld during the consultation period or after the relevant Area Committee meeting, the applicant will be asked to suggest an alternative name or names. The consultation period will then start again.

Signage for streets and buildings, postcodes

If no objections are upheld within the prescribed period (for naming applications) and the final name and/or numbering has been agreed with the applicant, the Council will then issue an Order officially assigning the names to streets and buildings and the numbers to buildings. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that buildings and streets have appropriate signage describing the new name and/or number. In the case of wrongful or illegal naming or numbering, the Council can take proceedings against the owner and, if necessary, erect correct signage at the owner's expense.

When the Order is issued, the Council asks the Royal Mail to confirm the postcodes assigned to any new addresses. We then send confirmation of the full address, including the postcode, to the applicant.