



# Memorials on Council Land Policy

## Purpose

This policy outlines Baw Baw Shire Council's position on the installation of memorials within public spaces throughout the municipal area.

## Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, Council adopts the following definitions:

### Memorial

Object(s) or structure(s) intended to commemorate a person or event.

### Public Open Space

Open spaces, reserves and recreational facilities under Baw Baw Shire ownership or management and accessible by the general public.

## Scope

This policy applies to all memorials within public open spaces under ownership or management by Baw Baw Shire Council.

This policy does not apply to:

- Memorials placed on roadsides. For proposed memorials in these locations, refer to the VicRoads Roadside Memorial Policy 2015;
- War service memorials or memorials of recognised (local, regional, state or national) historical significance;
- Renaming of existing memorial infrastructure; or,
- Council-led naming initiatives such as the naming of chairs within the West Gippsland Arts Centre, the naming of places by the Council in consultation with the Baw Baw Shire Place Naming Advisory Committee or recognition within initiatives such as the Sporting Walk of Fame which seeks to recognise contributions to community or accomplishments of individuals.

## Related policies and documents

- Public Art Policy
- Community Engagement Policy
- VicRoads Roadside Memorial Policy 2015
- Open Space Maintenance Standards
- Road Management Plan

## Policy principle

Plaques and memorials commemorating deceased persons will not be permitted by Council to be placed in public open space by private individuals.

Where temporary roadside memorials are established following a road incident, they will be managed in accordance with the relevant VicRoads Roadside Memorial Policy.

This policy does not impact existing memorials in public open spaces (non-retrospective).

## Policy detail

Good quality public open space is important, and matters to the community and these places provide a range of social, economic, and environmental benefits to the community, such as:

- A sense of well-being, rest, and relaxation.
- Refuge from day-to-day business and urban settings.
- Providing a space for exercise, play, and people to socialise and interact.
- Improving the aesthetics and amenity of urban areas.

Council understands the importance of maintaining our public open spaces for the entire community to enjoy and its obligation to preserve these characteristics for the broadest benefit.

The loss of a loved one is a difficult and heartbreaking experience, with their loss being keenly felt by their family and friends.

Council also understands and recognises the significance of mourning and memorialisation practices to residents and community members, as well as their importance to the grieving process.

However, the placement of private memorials commemorating individuals can be perceived to act as an occupation or privatisation of the public space and accordingly, residents are encouraged to pursue alternatives to the placement of memorials within public open spaces.

In the case of temporary roadside memorials erected following a fatal crash, Council will align its practice with that of VicRoads to ensure there is a uniform approach across all roads within Baw Baw Shire.

## Memorialisation Alternatives

Council recognises that there are many suitable options to create a lasting legacy that would fall outside this policy, such as:

### Placing a memorial in consultation with a Cemetery Trust

Several alternatives to traditional headstones and memorial markers are now available via Cemetery Trusts, including memorial markers, trees as well as garden plantings and features such as memorial seats.

These are often set within memorial gardens, which are designed to facilitate peaceful reflection.

### Starting or Contributing to Scholarships/Bursaries or Grants

Depending on the link a person had to a particular industry, school, sport or endeavour, a lasting memory can be made in the form of a scholarship, bursary or grant.

Various groups and clubs that may be applicable can be found on the Baw Baw Shire website.

### Developing an Online Memorial/History Website

There are several online memorial sites where the last legacy can be created with a variety of options available. For example, you can usually provide a historical timeline of photos and memories, including music. Some providers also enable memorials to be mapped to a geographic location and accessed via mobile devices.

### Memorials on Private, State and Federal Land

Approaching private, state or Commonwealth landowners who may have more appropriate sites for memorialisation and contacting landowners to determine if there are more appropriate sites for a memorial is an option.

- The Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning is the main contact for state government land.
- The Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment is the main contact for commonwealth land.

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