

Town of Gawler

Plaque and Commemorative Marker Installation Guidelines

1. Purpose of the Guidelines

These Guidelines support the Plaque and Commemorative Marker Installation Policy by providing clear, practical information for applicants and Council officers regarding:

- The types of and categories of plaques and commemorative markers that may be supported
- Eligibility criteria and key assessment considerations
- Appropriate locations, design standards and wording principles
- Application, approval and installation requirements
- Ongoing ownership, maintenance and Council responsibilities

These Guidelines are intended to improve consistency, transparency and fairness in the assessment of proposals and to assist members of the public seeking to commemorate people, events or places of clear and lasting significance to the Town of Gawler.

2. Relationship to Other Council Documents

These Guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- Plaque and Commemorative Marker Installation Policy
- Applying for a Plaque or Commemorative Marker on Council Land – Public Information
- Plaque and Commemorative Marker Application Form
- Internal Installation Procedures

Where there is any inconsistency between documents, the Policy prevails.

3. What Council May Consider

Council may consider applications for plaques or commemorative markers that:

- Commemorate a person, group, event or place of clear and lasting significance to the Town of Gawler
- Recognise genuine historical, cultural or social contributions that extend beyond private or family interests
- Are appropriate for installation in a public setting
- Are modest, proportionate and unobtrusive in scale and design
- Do not limit public access or create an exclusive or private use of Council land
- Align with contemporary community values, including inclusivity, cultural sensitivity and historical accuracy

Council adopts a tiered approach to commemorations, recognising that proposals differ in intent, scale and public purpose. Applications are assessed with regard to the primary purpose of the proposed commemoration and the relevant category outlined in Section 7.

4. Demonstrating Clear and Lasting Significance

“Clear and lasting significance” is generally demonstrated through one or more of the following:

- A demonstrable contribution made over a sustained period of time

- Recognition that extends beyond a single individual, family or organisation
- Historical, cultural or social importance to the broader Gawler community
- A strong and logical connection to the proposed location

Council may require independent verification of historical claims or factual details.

5. What Is Generally Not Supported

Council will generally not support plaques or commemorative markers that:

- Are primarily promotional, commemorative of fundraising activities, or commercial in nature
- Contain political, religious, ideological or advocacy messaging
- Commemorate individuals who are living, except in exceptional circumstances
- Duplicate or closely resemble existing recognition within the Town
- Require exclusive or quasi-exclusive use of public land
- Are attached to trees
- Are likely to become contentious or inconsistent with community values over time

6. Commemorating Individuals

Deceased Individuals

Applications to commemorate deceased individuals will generally only be considered where:

- At least 12 months has elapsed since the individual's death, allowing time for reflection and community perspective
- The individual's contribution is widely recognised and enduring
- The proposal aligns with one of the commemorative categories identified in Section 7

Living Individuals

Council will generally not support commemorating living individuals. Exceptional consideration may only be given where the applicant clearly demonstrates:

- An extraordinary and enduring contribution of state, national or international significance
- A strong and direct connection to the Town of Gawler
- Broad community support
- A low likelihood that the commemoration will become inappropriate or contentious over time

7. Categories of Plaques and Commemorative Markers

Applications are assessed by reference to the primary purpose of the proposed commemoration.

Category A – Community and Historical Commemorations

(Public significance)

Intent

To commemorate individuals, groups, events or places that have made a demonstrable and enduring contribution to the Town of Gawler's history, identity or community life.

Characteristics

- Historical, cultural or civic significance beyond private remembrance
- Broad relevance to the Gawler community
- Strong alignment with contemporary community values
- Permanent installations
- Located in prominent, civic or historically significant public locations
- Higher level of design scrutiny and historical verification

Examples

- Plaques recognising pioneers, significant public figures or civic leaders associated with Gawler
- Commemoration of a major historical event, milestone or place
- Interpretive plaques acknowledging sites of cultural, social or historical importance
- Heritage style plaques associated with significant buildings or locations

Category B – Personal Memorials in Public Places

(Commemoration of a death – benches, trees and shared features)

Intent

To recognise personal loss where public placement is sought, while delivering a functional, environmental or community benefit and maintaining the shared and inclusive nature of Council land.

Characteristics

- Demonstrated connection between the deceased and the proposed location
- Primary function of the asset takes precedence over commemoration
- Modest, discreet and unobtrusive in scale and wording
- Located in shared, non-prominent public spaces
- May be permanent or time-limited, at Council's discretion
- Use of small, standardised plaques or inscriptions
- Designed to accommodate multiple memorials over time
- Locations determined by Council based on asset lifecycle and maintenance considerations

Examples

- Memorial benches with discreet, standardised plaques
- Tree planting
- Memorial acknowledgements incorporated into public infrastructure such as pathways or shelters
- Shared plaques acknowledging multiple individuals
- Integrated inscriptions within paving, retaining walls or landscape features
- A small ground mounted plaque in a reserve recognising a long-term community volunteer
- A discreet garden plaque acknowledging a person with a strong connection to a local site
- A plaque within a designated memorial or remembrance area
- A low-profile marker acknowledging loss following a locally significant incident

Council may require standardised designs, size limits and wording length to manage cumulative impacts. Replacement of an asset does not guarantee replacement of a plaque or inscription. Stand-alone Memorials will only be considered where integration within existing infrastructure is not possible at the proposed location.

Category C – Temporary or Transitional Memorials

(Spontaneous or time-bound remembrance)

Intent

To respond compassionately to grief or collective loss following recent or significant events.

Characteristics

- Informal, spontaneous or community-initiated
- Time-limited and non-permanent
- Must not create safety, accessibility or amenity issues
- Subject to respectful removal following the agreed or implied period

Examples

- Floral tributes or messages placed following a fatal accident
- Temporary roadside or park-based memorials acknowledging recent loss
- Community remembrance displays following disasters or significant events
- Symbolic installations approved for a defined period prior to respectful removal

8. Location Principles

Proposed locations must:

- Have a clear and logical connection to the subject being commemorated
- Be compatible with existing land use, heritage controls and future asset renewal
- Avoid high-traffic or constrained areas where safety, accessibility or maintenance may be compromised
- Not contribute to an over-concentration or saturation of commemorative installations

Council determines the final approved location and may consider cumulative impacts across the Town.

9. Design, Materials and Size

Plaques and commemorative markers must:

- Be modest, durable and visually unobtrusive
- Be appropriate to the character and scale of the surrounding public space
- Use materials suitable for long-term outdoor conditions (for example bronze, stainless steel or engraved stone)

As a general guide:

- Plaques should not exceed approximately 300 mm x 200 mm, unless otherwise approved
- Design simplicity and durability are preferred over decorative embellishment

Council reserves the right to require changes to the design, materials, size or finish.

10. Wording and Content

Plaque wording must:

- Be accurate, respectful and factual
- Be concise and clearly written for a public audience
- Avoid subjective language, honorifics or promotional statements
- Avoid political, religious or advocacy content

Council may require independent verification of historical claims. Final approval of wording rests with Council.

11. Application Requirements

Applicants must submit a completed Plaque and Commemorative Marker Application Form, including:

- Details of the person, event or place to be commemorated
- A written justification addressing significance and eligibility
- Proposed wording for the plaque
- A proposed location and design concept

Incomplete applications cannot be assessed.

12. Assessment and Decision-Making

Applications are assessed having regard to:

- The relevant Policy principles and eligibility criteria
- Existing commemorations and precedent implications
- Community sensitivity or likelihood of dispute
- The cumulative long-term impact of commemorations in public spaces

Council is not obliged to approve any application. Authority to approve applications is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer or delegate.

13. Timeframes and Approval Validity

- Applications are generally assessed within 8 to 12 weeks
- Approvals are valid for 12 months from the date of approval
- If installation does not occur within this period, approval lapses unless an extension is granted

14. Costs and Installation

Applicants are responsible for:

- All design, manufacture and installation costs
- Any required permits, approvals or third-party consents

Installation must be:

- Undertaken by a suitably qualified contractor

- Completed in accordance with Council specifications
- Scheduled at a time approved by Council

15. Ownership, Maintenance and Removal

Once installed:

- Plaques and commemorative markers become the property of Council
- Council does not guarantee ongoing maintenance, retention or permanence

Council may relocate or remove plaques where required due to:

- Asset renewal or redevelopment
- Safety or accessibility issues
- Deterioration or damage
- Changes in community standards or expectations
- Factual inaccuracies or new information affecting appropriateness

Where practicable, the original applicant will be notified.

16. Records and Review

Council maintains a register of approved plaques and commemorative markers, including:

- Location
- Subject matter
- Approval date

These Guidelines may be updated from time to time to reflect operational experience, community expectations or changes in Council priorities.