

## 7.2.7 Official Name of the Thewlis Child and Family Centre

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### Recommendation(s)

That Council:

1. Note the outcome of the community consultation for the Thewlis Child and Family Centre naming process.
2. Formally resolve to rename (from the interim name of Thewlis Child & Family Centre) to Boollam Boollam Child & Family Centre.
3. Submit the preferred name to Geographic Names Victoria for registration.

### Attachments

1. Naming of Thewlis engagement results 2024

### Executive Summary

Geographic Names Victoria and Council's Place Naming Policy strongly encourage the use of indigenous language when considering naming of local roads, features and localities. Accordingly, it was deemed appropriate to pursue a process to identify a suitable indigenous name for this facility.

In collaboration with the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, three indigenous names, significant to the area, were identified as potential names for the centre. These were 'Benup', 'Boollam Boollam' and 'Nearkey Biik'.

In June 2024, Council conducted an extensive 4-week consultation process, inviting the community to vote on their preferred name from these three indigenous names. The results of the poll showed that, out of the 184 responses, 117 (or 63%) chose Boollam Boollam as their first preference.

### Background

When planning community facilities, they are assigned an interim reference name to help stakeholders consistently reference the project across various activities such as planning, budget management, design, construction and reporting. Typically, the interim name includes a location reference, such as a street or estate name, along with the type of facility.

The Thewlis Child & Family Centre (CFC) is currently under construction and due to open in early 2025. It will facilitate delivery of essential early years' services such as kindergarten, Maternal & Child Health and other allied health and wellbeing activities for the local community via its 3 kindergarten rooms, 3 consulting rooms and 1 multipurpose community room. The current interim name is based on location of the site, pre-subdivision.

The naming process undertaken followed the same process used for Council's last three Child & Family Centres within the Shire (namely Kone-wark, Kurm-boon and Toun-nun); identifying a name of indigenous connection or significance to the area. The decision was made to conduct the consultation process for the naming of Thewlis CFC prior to the formal opening to avoid confusion for eventual users.

In line with Geographic Names Victoria and Council's Place Naming Policy which strongly encourages authorities to consider local Aboriginal names for new roads, features and localities, Council Officers sought the approval from Councils Naming Places Committee in October 2023 to commence the naming process for Thewlis CFC with the aim to select an indigenous name, ensuring the process aligned with Councils Place Naming Policy.

Following approval by the Committee, Council worked with the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC) to:

- seek their suggestion on the most suitable names to shortlist,
- confirm the language and meanings of each name, and
- seek their endorsement of the use of the language for this purpose.

The BLCAC provided the following names and explanations as options for renaming Thewlis CFC:

- **Benup** '*ben-ooop*' (*White Gum*)  
Talks to our connection to Country and Culture. We use gum leaves for many things including Traditional Ceremonies like a smoking ceremony which we still practice in our current day.
- **Boollam Boollam** '*bullam bullam*' (Butterfly)  
To Bunurong people this symbolises growth, development, and change. It represents the journey of our community and how we evolve, mirroring how a caterpillar transforms into a butterfly. Just as the butterfly undergoes a transformative process, it serves as a reminder of the constant evolution and growth that occurs within us and our surrounding community.
- **Nearkey Biik** '*Near – Key, Bik*' (Take care of Country)  
Speaks to caring for Country, Water and our people. This is the foundation that our Cultural Values are built on and is taught from birth.

With the aim of fostering a strong connection to place and empowering community to be involved in decision making, the community were asked to vote on the three names, via a poll on the Creating Cardinia website, to decide the preferred name of the facility.

In accordance with the policy adopted by the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation also recognised in Council's Place Names Policy, only names suggested by BLCAC were considered.

The community consultation period ran from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> June with a total of 184 votes received. The name that received the highest number of community votes was Boollam Boollam.

The final name of the centre will be announced to the community following Council endorsement. This will take place before the centre's official opening, allowing community members and appointed Early Years Manager time to become familiar with and connected to the new name.

### Policy Implications

The delivery of child and family centres is supported by the following key Council Strategic plans:

- Council Plan 2021-25
- Liveability Plan 217-29
- Community Infrastructure Plan 2024

The process Council has followed for determining the preferred name for this centre conforms to the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria 2022 and is supported by Geographic Names Victoria. The names suggested conforms to Principle C of the naming rules, Linking to place.

## Relevance to Council Plan

### 2.1 We support the creation of liveable spaces and places

2.1.1 Advocate, plan for and deliver accessible community infrastructure and services that address community need.

### 5.1 We practise responsible leadership

5.1.1 Build trust through meaningful community engagement and transparent decision-making.

## Climate Emergency Consideration

N/A

## Consultation/Communication

This project has included consultation with the following internal Council teams:

- Social Infrastructure Planning Team
- Early Years Team
- Building and Facilities Team
- Property and Governance Team
- Arts and Creative Industries Team
- Communications and Engagement Team
- Community Strengthening Facilitator – Aboriginal Engagement
- Cardinia Place Names Committee

As previously mentioned, following approval by the Cardinia Place Names Committee, Council officers worked with the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC) to:

- seek their suggestion on the most suitable names to shortlist,
- confirm the language and meanings of each name, and
- seek their endorsement of the use of the language for this purpose.

A community engagement plan was developed to understand resource requirements, plan the type of engagement activities that would take place and ensure Council was meeting legal obligations in relation to community engagement.

As per Cardinia's Community Engagement Policy, this project was identified at a 'consult' level as the outcome was influenced by community feedback. The most appropriate form of engagement identified was a community poll via Creating Cardinia, Councils community engagement portal. In addition, targeted advertising through social media was scheduled for residents within proximity to the new facility.

The poll opened on 3 June 2024 and closed on 30 June 2024. The poll included the three indigenous names, as selected by BCALC and Council's Place Naming Committee. When seeking to use a Bunurong name, officers were advised to only consider Bunurong name options in the voting process. As a result, no other name or option to suggest an alternative name was incorporated in the engagement.

The results of the poll show that, out of the 184 responses (first preference votes):

- 117 (or 63%) votes for Boollam Boollam
- 51 (or 28%) votes for Benup

- 16 (or 9%) votes for Nearkey Biik

Whilst overall community feedback was positive, there was a limited amount of feedback from the community which indicated that changing the name could cause confusion. Additionally, the lack of alternative options or opportunities for feedback in the poll was seen by some as insufficient for true engagement. These concerns have been noted and will be considered in the preparation of future community engagement activities.

Please refer to Attachment 1 of this report for a more detailed breakdown of the community engagement results.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

The project included dedicated funds for this naming sub-project.

All preparation and planning activities have been undertaken using existing internal resources at no additional cost to Council.

### **Conclusion**

Following approval from Council's Place Naming Committee and formal permission from BLCAC for the use of the three indigenous names (Benup, Boollam Boollam and Nearkey Biik) as potential names for Thewlis CFC, community members have voted. Boollam Boollam received the highest number of votes and has been selected as the preferred name.

The new name of the centre will be revealed to the community and appointed Early Years Manager following Council's resolution via the appropriate community engagement channels.

Cardinia Shire Council



# Naming of Thewlis Child & Family Centre

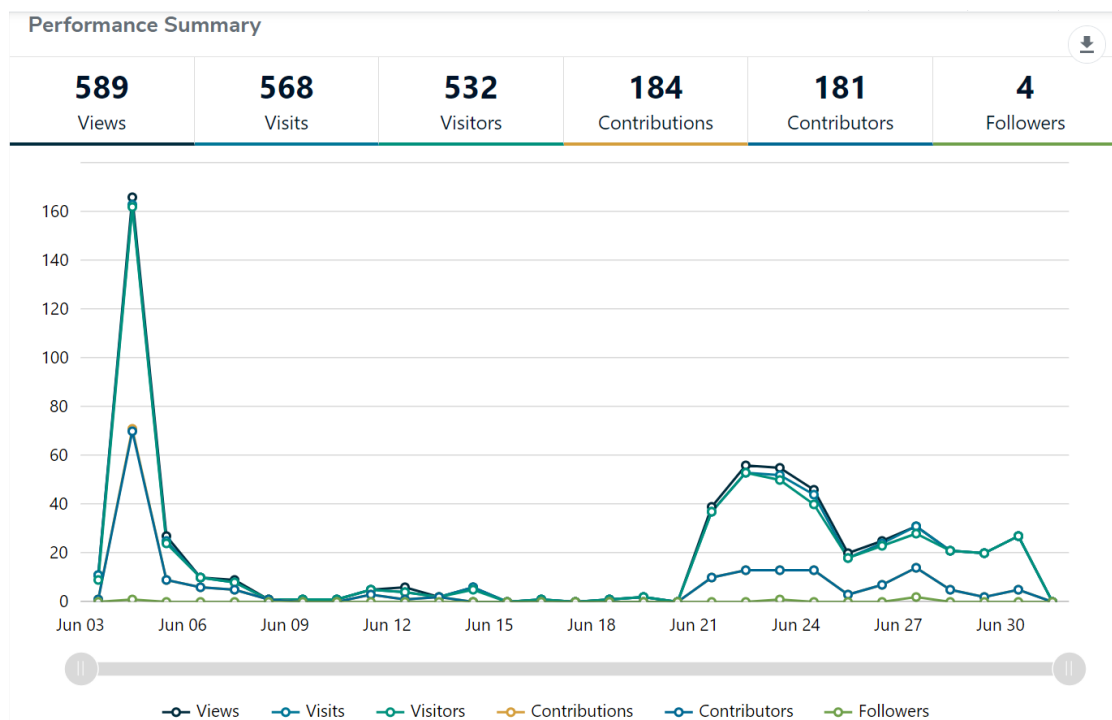
## Community Engagement Results

July 2024

The Thewlis Child & Family Centre (Pakenham) is currently under development and due to open to the public in January 2025. The centre is currently referred to as Thewlis Child & Family Centre as the interim name. In collaboration with the Bunarong Land Council Aboriginal Cooperation, three indigenous names, all holding significance to the area, were put forward for community to vote via a poll to determine which of the selected names they would like to see as the new name of this facility.

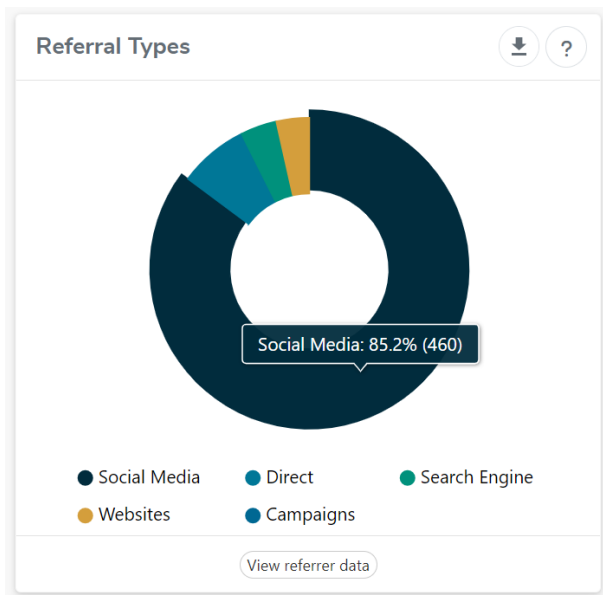
The names selected include: Benup, Boollam Boollam and Nearkey Bik. The consultation was open to community between 3 June - 30 June 2024. The results are now in with Boollam Boollam receiving the majority vote.

The following results provide key points gathered from the engagement.



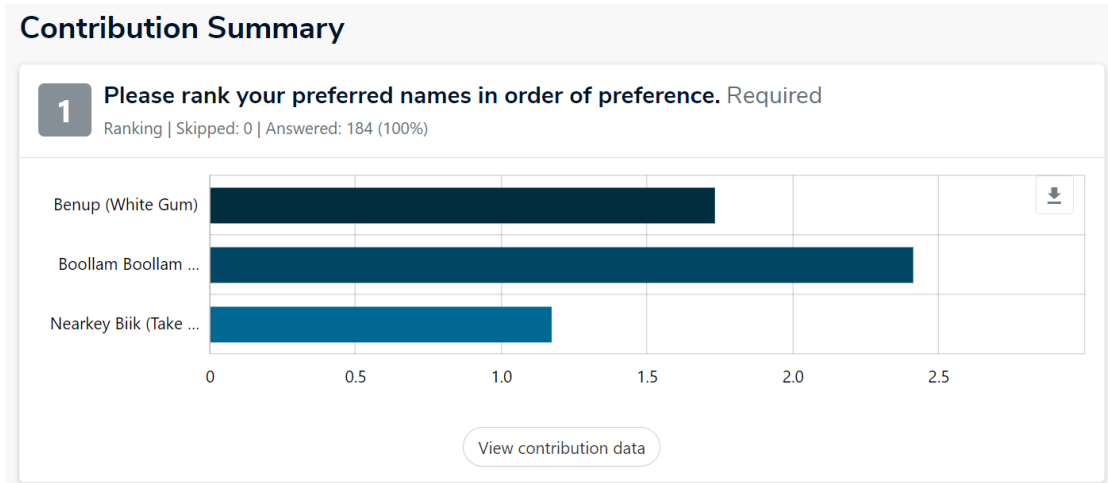
**Key points:**

- 589 views on the page
- 184 contributions to the survey
- 4 new followers gained.



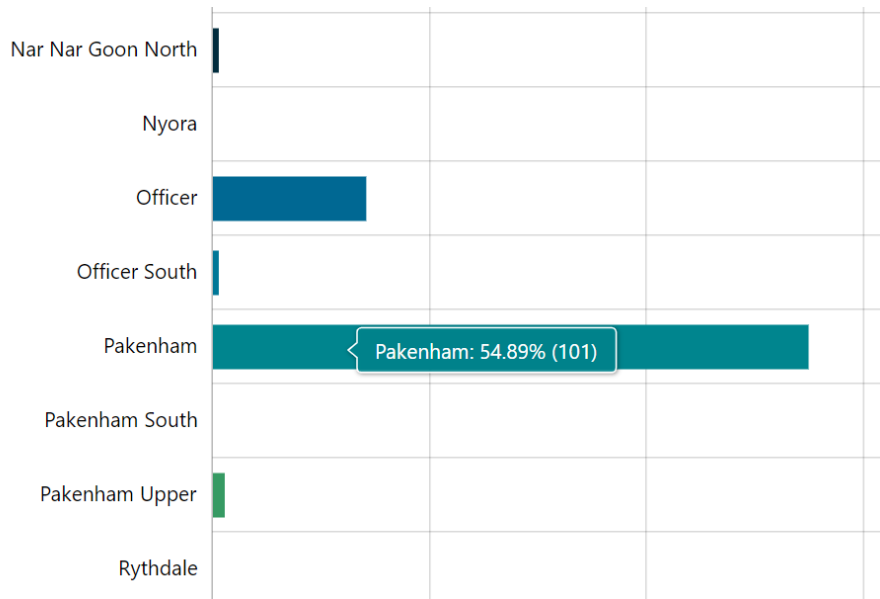
Key point:

- 85.2% of visits to the page came from Social Media



Key points:

- Boollam Boollam is the most preferred name which received the highest votes
- Benup received the second highest votes



Key point:

- 54.89% of people who contributed to the survey live in Pakenham