

PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Agenda Item 5.5

2 October 2007

PROPOSAL FOR SUBURB RENAMING FOR THE MELBOURNE CONVENTION CENTRE DEVELOPMENT AS SOUTH WHARF

Division Sustainability & Regulatory Services

Presenter John Noonan, Manager Regulatory Services (Planning and Building)

Purpose

1. To seek the Committee's approval to a proposal from the Acting Secretary of the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development ("DIIRD") to establish a new suburb named as *South Wharf* covering the new Melbourne Convention Centre and existing Exhibition Centre. The full area is generally bounded by the Yarra River, Clarendon Street, Normanby Road and Montague Street (refer to the locality plan at Attachment 1 ("the Plan")).

Recommendation from Management

2. That the Planning Committee:
 - 2.1. approve a public notice process proposing that a new suburb named *South Wharf* be established comprising Precinct 1 and Area F on the Plan and that the suburb name for Area B on the Plan, be changed to *Docklands*;
 - 2.2. note that the above process will also involve consultation with the City of Port Phillip and the Registrar of Geographic Names and a public notice in The Age Newspaper and individual notifications to affected businesses and individuals.

Key Issues

3. DIIRD and the other key stakeholders for the Development, view the significant scope of the Convention Centre project and its importance for the State and Melbourne, to merit a separate suburb name in its own right, supporting identification and marketing of the area.
4. The municipal boundary between the Cities of Melbourne and Port Phillip is shown by a continuous thick line on the Plan. The existing *Southbank* Suburb lies largely within the City of Melbourne (shown as Precinct 1 and Areas A, B and F on the Plan) and partly in the City of Port Phillip (shown as Precinct 2 and Areas C and D on the Plan).
5. DIIRD has requested that *South Wharf* comprises Precincts 1 and 2 and has made a similar representation for renaming Precinct 2, to the City of Port Phillip.
6. Property owners and occupiers may be affected by the change of name of a suburb. This may affect trading and business operations, business recognition and market competitiveness and inevitably requires replacement letterheads, postal addresses, telephone information, etc.

7. The proposed name “South Wharf” is considered to be satisfactory as it is related to both the locality and its historical associations, however it does require consideration of the areas that are currently called “*Southbank*” and which will be cut off by the renaming. DIIRD’s request cannot be achieved alone as it separates *Southbank* and that separation is opposed by the Registrar of Geographic Names. This means that Area B on the Plan must also be renamed from *Southbank*, but all options raise issues for neighbouring areas. Council’s ultimate decision should be based on formal consultation with affected owners and occupiers and assessment of submissions. The attached document “*Proposed New South Wharf Suburb Naming Options*” (Attachment 2) details the options which have been considered.
8. The *Docklands* Suburb was registered by gazetting, with all other suburbs within the City of Melbourne in 1998, as part of a statewide Government suburb naming program and the suburb basically aligns with the old Docklands Municipal Area. It is recommended that Area B with its geographical abuttal to that suburb, also be renamed to *Docklands* to best address the above issues.
9. The new locality name and its boundaries will be ultimately registered under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1999*. Guidelines under that Act provide that local government bodies are responsible for the naming and definition of localities and suburbs.
10. Council as the proper renaming authority has the ability to approve or refuse DIIRD’s request. However the Registrar has the power to consider any naming application which raises issues of state significance. These include proposals crossing more than one administrative boundary. In such a case the naming is then determined by a special Geographic Place Names Advisory Committee, convened by the Registrar. The Registrar’s Office has also advised that the Minister administering the Act also has the power to veto a Council decision.

Time Frame

11. Whilst the suburb naming is not considered urgent, there is a need to progress the matter especially given the consultative and assessment stages of the naming process may be quite lengthy. DIIRD has advised that early registration of the new name will ensure its consistent use in marketing the new centre and the precincts.

Relation to Council Policy

12. *South Wharf* has been applied extensively since the 1870’s, to the adjacent Yarra River wharves. Therefore the proposal is fully compliant with Council’s Naming of Places (Including Roads) Policy, which requires place names to reflect the history or culture or environment of a subject place.

Consultation

13. DIIRD has advised there is consensus on the locality name among the key project stakeholders for the development, including Plenary Group, Austexx and Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre. DIIRD has previously discussed the proposal at officer level with the City of Port Phillip and anticipates support from that Council.
14. The Registrar of Geographic Names (“the Registrar”) is responsible for registering place names, including Suburb names within Victoria. He has been informally approached to determine his initial stance of the proposal. He supports the principle of South Wharf as a new locality name but has certain requirements to be met regarding its new boundaries and the effects of such on neighbouring areas. He has also been party to DIIRD’s previous officer level discussions with the City of Port Phillip.

15. Public consultation will include advertisements in the Age Newspaper together with individual letters to property owners and occupiers within potentially affected areas. The City of Port Phillip must also be consulted.
16. A report will be presented to the Planning Committee on the outcome of future consultation.

Government Relations

17. The Council has been working closely with DIIRD in the planning and financing of the Convention Centre project.

Finance

18. The recommendations raise minimal financial implications for Council. Council's expenses should be limited to the associated consultation process and those costs, this is estimated at \$5,000 or less and can be met from the existing 20007/08 branch budget.

Legal

19. The report accurately details the legal process in relation to the proposal.

Sustainability

20. The proposal does not raise any sustainability issues for the City.

Comments

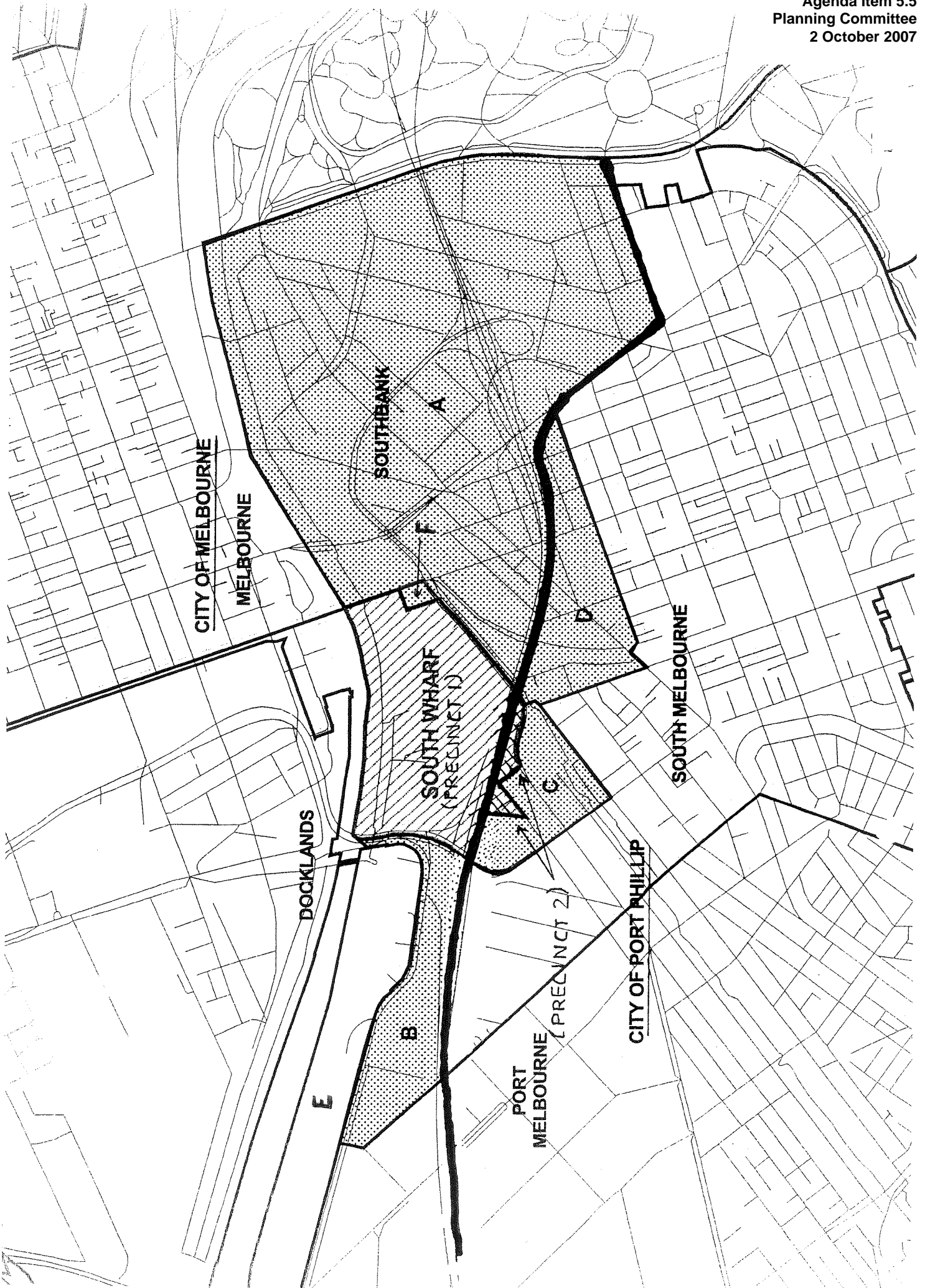
21. Naming options and issues, including comments of the Registrar, are set out in the Attachment (*Proposed New South Wharf Suburb Naming Options*).

Background

22. The Melbourne Convention Centre is to be commissioned and opened in 2009 as a key component of a \$1 billion redevelopment of its precincts and the riverfront. Council has committed considerable funding to the project including some \$20 million to the public realm.
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Attachments:

1. Locality Plan
2. Naming Options



PROPOSED NEW SOUTH WHARF SUBURB NAMING OPTIONS

The following report lists the options considered for naming of “South Wharf”.

The tests to be taken into account in any proposal to rename an area include land use and character. It is also preferable that suburb boundaries lie along significant boundaries such as main roads, topographical features and municipal boundaries.

The history to the *Southbank* suburb includes municipal boundary realignments in the early/mid 1990’s. Consequently *Southbank* lies largely within the City of Melbourne but partly within the City of Port Phillip.

The *Docklands* Suburb was registered by gazetting, with all other suburbs in 1998, as part of a statewide Government suburb naming program. *Docklands* spreads over the Yarra River basically aligning with the old Docklands Municipal Area. This has caused some minor mail delivery problems as all of *Docklands* has the same Post Code (3008) and lands north and south of the river are serviced by different Australia Post mail delivery centres.

Areas B, C and D are all abutted on the south by the *South Melbourne* suburb within the City of Port Phillip.

Area B is additionally abutted by areas within the City of Melbourne, to the west by the *Port Melbourne* suburb, on the north by the southern portion of the *Docklands* suburb (Area “E” on the Plan) and by *Southbank* (the proposed *South Wharf*) to the east.

The applicant has identified several possible treatments all based on the new *South Wharf* suburb having the same boundaries as the project area (Precincts 1 and 2).

Land shown F (“Area F”) on the Plan contains a building commonly referred to as the Tea House Building. That site is excluded from the Project and hence from DIIRD’s proposed *South Wharf*. However DIIRD’s proposal means the Tea House Building is left in *Southbank* but isolated from that suburb as an “island site” to the west of Spencer Street. The site needs to be included in the *South Warf* suburb to ensure a responsible suburb boundary along the road.

NAMING OPTIONS

REF.	DETAILS	ISSUES	REGISTRAR OF GEOGRAPHIC NAMES VIEW
1	Rename Precinct 1 as <i>South Wharf</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is the ideal outcome for DIIRD especially if associated with a Port Phillip City Council renaming of Precinct 2 as <i>South Wharf</i>, thereby agreeing with the Melbourne Convention Centre Development Area itself. ▪ However this creates geographically separated areas for <i>Southbank</i> 	This separation should not be allowed and therefore Area B's suburb name also needs to be changed
2	Rename the general area as <i>South Wharf</i> but do not fix the exact boundaries for such	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is known as setting an unbounded locality and gives some identification for the Project ▪ The actual extents of the area are indeterminable thus leading to dual addressing contradicting the validity of automated property systems. ▪ Australia Post will not then recognise <i>South Wharf</i> for addressing and mail delivery. 	This cannot be allowed
3	Rename Precinct 1 and Area F as <i>South Wharf</i> and also give Area B a totally new suburb name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Includes the Tea House Building in <i>South Wharf</i> thus setting a responsible suburb boundary along Spencer Street. ▪ The scope of this new suburb would be very small in regard to neighbouring suburbs 	Cannot support this because the extent of Area B is small in comparison with existing suburbs
4	Rename Precinct 1 and Area F as <i>South Wharf</i> and rename Area B as <i>Port Melbourne</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Includes the Tea House Building in <i>South Wharf</i> thus setting a responsible suburb boundary along Spencer Street. ▪ Area B is abutted on the west by the suburb of <i>Port Melbourne</i> in the City of Melbourne. ▪ The option meets the critical like land-use and character tests for locality naming. ▪ There are existing Lorimer Street property numbering problems that can only be managed by Area B being in a different suburb to <i>Port Melbourne</i>. ▪ Most likely opposed by owners and occupiers of properties in Area B considering it diminishes the status and recognition of their <i>Southbank</i> properties. 	This should not be the recommended option given the addressing problems
5	Rename Precinct 1 and Area F as <i>South Wharf</i> and rename area B as <i>South Melbourne</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Includes the Tea House Building in <i>South Wharf</i> thus setting a responsible suburb boundary along Spencer Street. ▪ Area B is abutted on the south by the suburb of <i>South Melbourne</i> in the City of Port Phillip ▪ The City of Port Phillip (at officer level) will likely support the renaming of Precinct 2 as <i>South Wharf</i> and also possibly propose a renaming of Areas C and E as <i>South Melbourne</i>, considering these areas are more closely linked to such. ▪ The option meets the like land use and character tests for locality naming. ▪ Results in an undesirable outcome of a suburb within two municipalities. 	Does not oppose as a possible naming option for Area B, as most other possibilities are more problematic.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contradicts a public recognition of and a history of <i>South Melbourne</i> being outside of the City of Melbourne. The City of Port Phillip may object for the same reason. ▪ Most likely objected to by owners and occupiers of properties in Area B as it could be perceived as diminishing the status and recognition of their <i>Southbank</i> properties. 	
6	Rename Precinct 1, Area F and Area B as <i>South Wharf</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Includes the Tea House Building in <i>South Wharf</i> thus setting a responsible suburb boundary along Spencer Street. ▪ DIIRD has advised this is its least preferred option as it does not accord with the Development's Precincts. ▪ <i>South Wharf</i> is not a true reflection of Area B as it only has a minimal abuttal to the Yarra River and the old Wharves themselves. ▪ Development activity continues to increase westerly from the Central City area meaning that like land use and character tests should be met. ▪ It is logical to expect property owners and occupiers within Area B would consider the new name to have similar status to Southbank, certainly preferable to South or Port Melbourne. 	Does not oppose as a naming option.
7	Rename Precinct 1, Area F and Area B and Area E as <i>South Wharf</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Includes the Tea House Building in <i>South Wharf</i> thus setting a responsible suburb boundary along Spencer Street. ▪ This proposal additionally requires a renaming of Area E (<i>Docklands</i>). Whilst Area B and E are not of a like character, this rectifies a problem of two portions of Docklands existing north and south of the Yarra River. ▪ Changing Area E from <i>Docklands</i> would impact on hundreds or recent residential owners and occupiers 	Concerned on the affects on the Area E owners and occupiers
8	Rename Precinct 1 and Area F as <i>South Wharf</i> and Area B as <i>Docklands</i> Recommended Option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Includes the Tea House Building in <i>South Wharf</i> thus setting a responsible suburb boundary along Spencer Street. ▪ Area B is abutted on the north by the suburb of <i>Docklands</i> in the City of Melbourne ▪ The option conflicts somewhat with the like land-use and character tests for locality naming. (The adjoining <i>Docklands</i> is residential, whilst Area B lies within the Business 3 Zone of the Melbourne Planning Scheme). ▪ Naming Area B as <i>Docklands</i> would lose the area's history to the <i>Docklands</i> suburb which basically aligns with that old municipality. 	This is the preferred option Whilst there are some land use differences, the prime business in Area B promotes itself as <i>Subaru Interactive at Docklands</i> seemingly without detriment

FINANCE ATTACHMENT

**PROPOSAL FOR SUBURB RENAMING FOR THE MELBOURNE CONVENTION
CENTRE DEVELOPMENT AS SOUTH WHARF**

The recommendations raise minimal financial implications for Council. Council's expenses should be limited to the associated consultation process and those costs, this is estimated at \$5,000 or less and can be met from the existing 20007/08 branch budget

Phu Nguyen
Acting Manager Financial Services

LEGAL ATTACHMENT

PROPOSAL FOR SUBURB RENAMING FOR THE MELBOURNE CONVENTION CENTRE DEVELOPMENT AS SOUTH WHARF

The *Geographic Place Names Act* 1998 (‘the Act’) makes provision for the naming of places and registration of place names.

The *Guidelines for Geographic Place Names Victoria* (“the Guidelines”) made under the Act set out the principles, policies and procedures for place naming.

The Council is responsible for the naming and definition of a suburb within its municipality. The Guidelines provide that Council may either receive or initiate a proposal.

Section 11 (2) of the Act provides that

“The Registrar must amend a geographic name in accordance with an application for amendment made in accordance with this Act and the guidelines, other than an application that is referred to a Committee for advice.”

The recommendations of this report are made in accordance with the Act and the Guidelines.

Toby Hayes
Acting Manager Legal Services