Why have official place names?

- To provide practical, unambiguous, fundamental and unique location identification and navigation for the physical landscape we live in
- To recognise heritage and culture – to give a sense of place
- To provide a reliable and authoritative source for standardised, consistent and accurate names
- To demonstrate New Zealand’s jurisdictional interests
- To provide a fundamental data theme for geospatial data layers
- To ensure consistency in the use of place names
- To identify where we are as we go about our everyday business – they are a component of our infrastructure, and most importantly they matter in emergency responses
- To ensure that important names are preserved and restored

Why are geographic names important to New Zealanders?

- There are long term benefits to the nation—practical, administrative, social, cultural and historical—including national or cultural identity
- A geographic name is a fundamental part of address, along with road name and property number. Therefore, unique and usable geographic names form a key purpose to locate people and property, contributing to efficient government administration and linking data for a wide range of public and private purposes

What is the standard proposal process?

1. Proposal received
   When a new place name proposal is received, the NZGB Secretariat assesses it for completeness, before it will be processed. This includes ensuring that consultation with affected people, including the local community and iwi, has occurred. Without these minimum requirements, the NZGB will not have the necessary information to make a decision on the proposal.

2. Research and report by Secretariat
   The NZGB Secretariat undertakes further research and communicates directly with groups such as local councils and local iwi (guided by Te Puni Kōkiri). A proposal report is prepared for the NZGB’s consideration.

3. NZGB considers proposal
   The NZGB will consider the proposal at its next meeting and decide whether or not to support the proposal. If it does not support the proposal, the process ends.

4. Proposal publicly notified seeking submissions
   If the NZGB supports the proposal it notifies it on the LINZ website, in newspapers and other publications, asking for supporting or objecting submissions from the public with reasons. Media releases, editorials and social media such as Facebook are other important ways of engaging with as many people as possible. For the NZGB to make an informed, robust and enduring decision on the proposal, it is critical that it understands the views of the local community, including iwi.

5. NZGB considers submissions
   Once the notification period closes, the NZGB reviews any submissions received.

6. NZGB or Minister make final decision
   If there are no submissions or only supporting submissions then the NZGB makes the final decision to make the proposed place name official. If the NZGB upholds submissions objecting to the name it can make the final decision. However, if it doesn’t agree with objecting submissions, then the Minister for Land Information makes the final decision.

7. Official place name gazetted
   The NZGB publishes the final decision in the New Zealand Gazette as conclusive evidence of the official place name.

8. Gazetteer updated
   The decision is also added to the NZGB’s Gazetteer (gazetteer.linz.govt.nz) - an online repository for all place names that includes additional contextual information, including position, extent and history/origin/meaning.
What does the Treaty Names process?

1. Proposal received
   - The Office of Treaty Settlements gathers the required information from the claimant group and submits the Treaty name proposal to the NZGB. The story associated with the name is essential to determine correct orthography.

2. Review
   - The Office of Treaty Settlements is advised of any immediate concerns.

3. Research
   - The NZGB Secretariat researches the history of any existing place names.

4. NZGB consideration
   - NZGB recommendations are made to the Office of Treaty Settlements.

5. Final decision
   - The Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations makes the final decisions on name changes and restored names included in a list in the Deed Settlement. Settlement legislation is enacted making them official.

6. Post settlement
   - Official Treaty names are published in the New Zealand Gazette and newspapers. They are also added to the NZGB’s Gazetteer. Treaty names are protected from future changes.

What does the Minister for Land Information need to do?

- Make final decisions on place name proposals when they’re referred by the NZGB
- Receive the NZGB’s Annual Report for tabling in the House
- Be the media spokesperson for controversial place name decisions
- Get advice from the NZGB on matters to do with official place names
- For local authority District and Region name alterations, recommend to the Governor General to amend the name of the relevant local authority to give effect to the alteration
- Appoint eight of the ten NZGB members:
  - four nominated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, New Zealand Geographical Society Inc, Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ Inc and Local Government New Zealand
  - two recommended by the Minister for Māori Development
  - two others of the Minister for Land Information’s choice

Other Ministers who decide official place names:

- Minister of Conservation for Crown protected area names
- Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations for Treaty names

What does the NZGB name?

- Places where people live, such as suburbs, town, localities and cities
- Physical geographic features of the landscape, whether natural or man-made
- Historic places where events occurred
- Undersea features on New Zealand’s continental shelf
- Antarctic features in the Ross Dependency
- Crown protected areas (Department of Conservation reserves). If the NZGB does not concur then the Minister of Conservation makes the final decision
- Territorial Authority districts and regions

The NZGB

- Anselm Haanen
  Chairperson, Surveyor-General, ex-officio
- Adam Greenland
  National Hydrographer, Land Information New Zealand, ex-officio
- Paulette Tamati-Elliffe
  Nominated by Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
- Robin Kears
  Nominated by New Zealand Geographical Society Inc
- Shaun Barnett
  Nominated by Federated Mountain Clubs of NZ Inc
- Bonita Bigham
  Nominated by Local Government New Zealand
- Shane Te Ruki
  Recommended by the Minister for Māori Development
- Chanel Clarke
  Recommended by the Minister for Māori Development
- Merata Kawharu
  Appointed by the Minister for Land Information
- Jenni Vernon
  Appointed by the Minister for Land Information

Other NZGB Committees

- Undersea Feature Names Committee
- Antarctic Names Committee
- Māori Names Committee

The Secretariat

- Wendy Shaw
  Secretary, Land Information New Zealand
- Ginny Leggett
  Senior Advisor – Treaty Names, Land Information New Zealand
- Jill Remnant
  Advisor, Land Information New Zealand
- Christopher Stephens
  Advisor, Land Information New Zealand
  (the Secretariat researches, liaises, consults and advises)