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Proposal to change Australian street name to 'Hellenic Avenue' slashed



Despite being the 'home' of the Greek Orthodox Community and Parish of St George and the location of its college for over half a century, the proposal to rename the infamous Rose Street in Mile End in South Australia to 'Hellenic Avenue' has been abandoned due to community opposition.

"We proposed the name change as a way to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Greek War of Independence in an attempt to honour our heritage and to contribute to the Hellenic celebrations that are taking place all over the world," Father Diogenis Patsouris said in reference to a written submission to the West Torrens Council, before the proposal was put out for community consultation.

After receiving public consultation letters alerting them regarding the potential change, some local residents opposed to the idea expressing concerns about a potential loss to SA's cultural history if the name was changed. They argued that prominent author and artist Barbara Hanrahan lived on Rose Street and also featured it in her best-selling fiction and art, therefore a change of name could be seen as an 'act of vandalism' and a sign of disrespect towards the history attached to the street's name.

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Since that time, debate has ignited on social media while protest signs also appeared along Rose Street, asking for a no vote on the proposal whilst concerns were also raised about a potential cost to businesses in the street, from having to change their branding to a new address.

“We are not in Greece, why should we be naming streets after their War? There’s a large Greek population in that area, but still...” wrote one user on social media while another one said this was a ridiculous idea given “we are in Australia not Greece.”

“Our aim as Greek Australians and Christians is to always link our two countries and bring peace and unity within our community. Taking into account the response and concerns expressed from our residents, we decided to withdraw the request as our intention was never to upset our neighbours,” Father Diogenis said.

Greek Australian local MP and former SA Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis said it was disappointing to see ethnicity had been brought into the debate on social media.

According to credible sources that Neos Kosmos cannot reveal, sadly a number of Greek Australians that live in the area also opposed to the idea proposed by the St George Greek Orthodox Community and Parish.

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