

NATURE STRIPS POLICY

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| Policy Type | Council |
| Responsible Department | City Infrastructure |
| Responsible Officer | Manager City Operations |
| Related Policies and Procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tree Management Policy Greening Council Verge / Create Nature Strip Guidelines and Specifications |
| Community Plan Link | <p>4. Places and Spaces</p> <p>4.2 We create and activate welcoming public spaces for all people to deliver memorable experiences that inspire connection, foster a strong sense of place, and strengthen our City's identity whilst enhancing its unique brand.</p> |
| Date Originally Adopted | 25 October 2010 |
| Last Review Date | 8 December 2025 |
| Next Review Date | December 2028 |
| ECM Document No. | 9171028 |

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1. Nature Strips, also known as verges, are classified as part of public road under the *Local Government Act 1999* and as such are owned by Council
- 1.2. Council is responsible for the planting and maintenance of street trees and for ensuring that nature strips pose no threat to public safety.
- 1.3. Householders are encouraged to beautify and plant out their nature strip providing they seek permission, meet safety criteria and are responsible for ongoing maintenance.
- 1.4. This policy aims to guide management of nature strips to ensure the ongoing maintenance and agreed service requirement for street trees, footways, roads and drainage.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This Policy applies to the management, construction, maintenance and repair of nature strips within the City of Unley.

3. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. The purpose of this Policy is to provide clear direction for the management and maintenance of nature strips within the City of Unley.
- 3.2. This Policy aims to inform contractors, builders, developers and residents of their responsibilities to minimise impacts on the local environment and reduce the potential for future damage to private or public property associated with the construction, maintenance or repair of nature strips.

4. DEFINITIONS

| <u>Term</u> | <u>Definition</u> |
|-------------------------|--|
| Nature Strip | Describes the unpaved area of the footpath which lies between the back of the kerb and the paved footpath area which is not part of the crossing place to a property and is not being used for any other public service facility. |
| Streetscape Plan | A collective plan for cohesive streetscape elements including footpaths and landscaping. Streets with a streetscape plan are typically on main roads and/or shared path corridors and the associated nature strips garden areas are maintained by Council. |
| Verge | Another common term for <i>Nature Strip</i> |
| Weed Species | Species of plants declared by regulation of the Minister under the <i>Landscape South Australia Act 2019</i> . |

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

| <u>Role</u> | <u>Responsibilities</u> |
|-------------------------|---|
| Elected Members | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsible for the approval and adoption of this Policy |
| Manager City Operations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsible for the review and application of this Policy |
| All Employees | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must comply with the requirements of this Policy |

6. STATEMENT

6.1. Planting by Residents

- 6.1.1. The participation of residents in the beautification of the City is to be encouraged, but unauthorised planting or replanting by residents is not permitted.
- 6.1.2. Residents are entitled to plant lawn on the verge immediately adjacent to their property.
- 6.1.3. Planting of low growing shrubs and ground covers by residents on nature strips fronting their properties shall be permitted providing that;
 - plants do not exceed 600 mm in height;
 - plants do not interfere with vehicular or pedestrian visibility;
 - no hazard is created;
 - plants cannot form a hedge and must be spaced to allow locations for egress from legally parked vehicles
 - no declared weed species are used;
 - plants do not contravene an approved planting or Streetscape Plan;
 - the planting style is compatible with the surrounding streetscape;
 - vegetation is maintained by the resident to a standard approved by the Council;

- the resident formally requests and receives authorisation from the Council pursuant to Sections 221 and 232 of the *Local Government Act 1999* for the planting to proceed; and
- the resident accepts in writing that no recourse is available for damage to the vegetation or any other landscaping features by service authorities, Council activity, vandalism or theft.

6.2. Artificial Turf

- 6.2.1. The installation of artificial lawn / synthetic turf or a fully impervious membrane (such as black plastic) is not permitted effective 14 December 2020. Existing installations may remain in place, subject to 6.2.2
- 6.2.2. Administration reserves the right to undertake any modifications or remove existing artificial lawn / synthetic turf or fully impervious membranes to facilitate any Council objectives or requirements at Council's discretion including non-Council works provided by utility and service providers.

6.3. General Conditions and Approval

- 6.3.1. Administration is authorised to approve the installation of nature strips based upon the following:
 - that the owner of the property adjacent to the nature strip agrees to meet the total cost of the development to be undertaken either by Council or others;
 - that the adjacent 'owner' undertakes to indemnify the Council against any claim for compensation or damages arising out of the development of the nature strip, except when the work is undertaken by Council, and for any negligence of the owner or his/her agents during the maintenance of the nature strip;
 - that the proposed plantings meet the criteria in section 6.1 and will not, in the opinion of Administration, cause interference to or loss of view to pedestrians using the footway or motorists entering the street from private property or entering the street from an adjoining street intersection or junction;
 - that the adjacent owner undertakes to advise any purchaser of the property of the conditions associated with the maintenance of the nature strip.

6.4. Unkempt Nature Strips and Removal

- 6.4.1. Unkempt nature strips will have dolomite applied as a minimum standard treatment by Council, where practical.
- 6.4.2. In the event that an adjacent owner fails to maintain the nature strip in front of his/her property to the satisfaction of Administration, then Administration is authorised to require the nature strip to be maintained in a satisfactory condition.
- 6.4.3. The adjacent owner is to be given fourteen days' notice detailing the requirements to satisfactorily maintain the nature strip.
- 6.4.4. If after the expiration of the notice the nature strip is not maintained to the satisfaction of the relevant officer, Administration can authorise the removal of a nature strip by advising the owner of the adjacent property that he/she is required to remove the nature strip vegetation within fourteen days.
- 6.4.5. In the event that the adjacent owner does not comply with the notice to remove the nature strip within fourteen days Administration may remove the nature strip and charge the adjacent owner the actual cost of the work involved with the removal.
- 6.4.6. If for any other reason the nature strip is required to be removed Administration is authorised to remove the nature strip provided the fourteen days' notice has been given to the adjacent owner stating Council's intention to remove the nature strip. The cost of such removal shall be met by Council.

6.5. Road or Footway Construction

- 6.5.1. Where a road or footway is to be reconstructed Administration shall ascertain from owners of all properties adjacent to the reconstruction work whether they wish to have a dolomite or a loam nature strip. Residents are to be encouraged to consider Council's Environmental Policy and implementation plans, when making their choices.
- 6.5.2. Administration is authorised to install the nature strips requested at no cost to the adjacent owners, provided that the owners agree to undertake the maintenance of the nature strip, as set out in this policy.

6.6. Greening Verge Incentive

- 6.6.1. Council encourages the adoption and gardening of nature strips to promote increased street tree health, reduced storm water run-off and increasing urban biodiversity through the Greening Verge Incentive.
- 6.6.2. The Greening Verge Incentive is open to any Unley resident or organisation with an existing dolomite nature strip over 0.4m in width and at least 3m2 in total size.
- 6.6.3. Applications are assessed on a first eligible in first served basis up to the available project funding as per the approved annual budget.
- 6.6.4. Administration is authorised to install the nature strips at no cost to the adjacent owners, provided that the owners agree to undertake the maintenance of the nature strip, as set out in this policy
- 6.6.5. It is the applicant's responsibility to supply and install plants and/or lawn in adherence to the criteria in section 6.

7. DELEGATIONS

- 7.1. All delegations and sub-delegations are outlined in Council's Delegations document located on the City of Unley's website.

8. LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 1999*

9. AVAILABILITY OF POLICY

- 9.1. The Policy is available for public inspection during normal office hours at:

The Civic Centre,
181 Unley Road, Unley SA 5061.

A copy may be purchased for a fee as determined annually by Council.

It is also available for viewing, download and printing free of charge from the Council's website www.unley.sa.gov.au.

10. DOCUMENT HISTORY

| Date | Version No. | Comment |
|------------------|-------------|----------|
| 25 October 2010 | Version 1 | C758/10 |
| 14 December 2020 | Version 2 | C0405/20 |
| 8 December 2025 | Version 3 | C1678/25 |