

# VERGE TREATMENT POLICY

**Policy Type: Council Policy**

**Policy Owner: Manager Natural Areas and Parks**

**Policy No. CP-086**

**Last Review Date: 21 November 2019**

## POLICY OBJECTIVES

To enhance and maintain the visual amenity and safety of street verges throughout the City of Melville.

## POLICY SCOPE

This policy sets out the process and conditions for all verges within the City of Melville.

The verge is the area of land between the kerb and the property boundary. The purpose of the verge is to provide an area where public utilities/services such as power, gas and telecommunications can be located. The verge is also a public open space recognised and valued for its street trees and streetscape environment.

## POLICY STATEMENT

The City is committed to creating an environment that is visually appealing, safe and contributes to the broader environment in a and sustainable way environment. The City encourages the use of natural materials within the verge whilst understanding the benefits of innovative products that form modern landscapes.

The City appreciates the contribution that residents make regarding the landscaping and maintenance of verges adjacent to their properties. The City is of the view that property owners should take responsibility for the landscaping, irrigation and maintenance of street verges adjacent to their property, whilst the street trees will be maintained by the City as per the Tree Policy (CP-029).

### 1. **General**

The verge is the area of land between the kerb and the property boundary. The purpose of the verge is to provide an area where public utilities/services such as power, gas and telecommunications can be located. The verge is also a public open space recognised and valued for its street trees and streetscape environment.

The owner or occupier of the adjoining property may install a permissible verge treatment. All modifications to the verge are undertaken with the knowledge that future maintenance or construction may impact the new treatment.

The City recommends undertaking below ground service investigation (e.g. "Dial Before You Dig") prior to any works.

Permissible treatments include vegetation and hard surfacing as detailed below, providing that:



- It is contained within the designed area/s at all times;
- It does not present as a hazard; and
- It is neat and tidy.

~~The owner or occupier of land/property which is directly adjacent to that part of the verge may install a permissible verge treatment. Permissible treatments include vegetation and hard surfacing as detailed below.~~

The following general conditions shall be met, unless written authorisation is received from the City:

- Changing the level of the verge, either fully or partially, is not permitted.
- Clear access, as determined by the City, is to be maintained to:
  - all service infrastructure (like inspection chambers, pits and poles) and
  - all designated path areas (like footpaths, roads and driveways).
- Where there is no footpath, ensure a pedestrian has safe and clear access immediately adjacent to the road. The City has a preference for this space to be 2 metres wide, however the allowance for this space to be less than 2 metres wide can be determined at the City's discretion.
- Sight lines for pedestrian and vehicular access across and through the verge shall be maintained in accordance with Austroads Guidelines and Australian standards.
- All forms of loose aggregate materials such as pebbles, stones, crushed brick and gravel are acceptable if able to be fully retained in its designated space and separated from path areas.
- All rectification works will be the responsibility of the owner, to meet these general conditions.

Where treatments have been installed prior to the adoption of this policy, the City at its discretion may approve retrospectively.

- ~~0.5m set back and clear access to all service infrastructure (like manholes, pits and poles) and hard stand (like footpaths and driveways).~~
- ~~Where there is no footpath ensure a pedestrian has safe and clear access (immediately adjacent to the road).~~
- ~~Sight lines for pedestrian and vehicular access across or through the verge shall be maintained in accordance with Austroads Guide to Traffic Management - Part 6: Intersections, Interchanges and Crossings.~~
- ~~Roads and paths shall be kept free from obstructions, both permanent and temporary, including overgrown vegetation and loose material, to ensure clear access is maintained at all times for pedestrians and vehicle movement.~~
- ~~Changing the level of the verge, either fully or partially, is not permitted, without prior authorisation from the City.~~
- ~~All forms of loose aggregate materials such as pebbles, stones, crushed brick and gravel are acceptable, only if the following conditions are met:~~
  - ~~It does not present as a hazard~~
  - ~~Is neat and tidy~~
  - ~~Contained within the verge area at all times.~~

~~The City can at its discretion ask that these materials be removed if these conditions are not met at the owners expense~~



~~The City advises owners undertake a dial before you dig check prior to undertaking any works.~~

~~Where treatments have been installed prior to the adoption of this policy, the City at its discretion may approve retrospectively.~~

## **2. Vegetation**

~~A minimum of 50% of the verge must be vegetation and the City encourages waterwise verge planting.~~

~~The City encourages the planting out the verge with ground cover, grass, small shrubs or an edible garden. Where the verge is adjacent to a Natural Area, the City has a preference for local native plants to be utilised.~~

All vegetation, excluding street trees, must comply with the following conditions:

- ~~• Maximum growth/height restrictions apply, including flowering spikes, to retain sight lines. In general terms this will be deemed to be 600mm from the finished ground level, or in compliance with Austroads Guide to Road Design and relevant Australian standards.~~
- ~~• Austroads Guide to Traffic Management – Part 6: Intersections, Interchanges and Crossings.~~
  - ~~• Species that have potential to cause harm or deemed hazardous, by the City, are not permitted.~~
- ~~• Poisonous, spiky foliated, pest or declared weed species are not permitted. If these plants are identified the City will ask for these to be removed, at owners cost.~~
- All turf species that can achieve good site coverage are acceptable.
- No damage to existing street trees including their root system shall occur during any modification to the verge. If it is found that the trees health declines to a point where the tree needs to be removed, in response to these modifications, the property owner may be responsible for all costs associated with removal and replacement of the tree, as per the City's Tree Policy (CP-029).

~~• Where the verge is near a natural area, the City has a preference for local native plants to be utilised.~~

## **3. Street Trees**

The City is responsible for all trees on the verge, as per Tree Policy (CP-029).

## **4. Irrigation**

Where irrigation is installed, in the verge it shall:

- ~~• Be designed to minimise spray onto any road or footpath ~~Minimise spray onto any road or footpath when watering.~~~~
- Ensure they are not a potential tripping hazard to pedestrians.
- ~~• Maximise efficiency and minimise water usage~~
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## **5. Hard surfacing**

### **5.0 General**



The City does not allow the installation of In-situ concrete or any asphalt material on the verge except as part of a designated crossover and City footpath.

All other hard surface treatments are permissible, including pavers and synthetic turf, when installed in accordance with the below.

Unless written approval has been granted hard surfacing treatments shall:

- Be installed in a manner that can easily be removed to access underground services when required.
- Be setback a minimum of 2 metres from the edge of any street tree.
- Cover a maximum of 50% of the verge including the crossover with the exception of property access driveways (e.g. battle-axe lots).
- Be 'green' if synthetic turf.
- Not cause flooding.
- Be trafficable.

Where a tree is not present on the verge and the City considers there is adequate space for a tree the City will at some point plant a tree on that verge. This will need to be taken into consideration when designing the hardstand area as a 2 metre circle or square will be required for planting.

The City deems all hard surfacing to be treatments that impede water absorption, including pavers of all kind and synthetic turf. Unless written approval is received from the city all hard surfacing will:

- ~~• Cover a maximum of 50% of the verge including the crossover.~~
- ~~• Be setback a minimum of 2 metres from the edge of any street tree.~~
- ~~• Be installed in a manner that can easily be removed to access underground services as/when required.~~
- ~~• Be trafficable if pavers.~~
- ~~• Be 'green' if synthetic turf.~~
- ~~• Be requested to be removed/reduced at the adjacent property owners expense if found by the City to be causing flooding.~~
- ~~• If there is currently no street tree on the verge, a new one will be required to be planted by the City. The owner will be required to leave a two metre diameter circle or square at a location approved~~
- ~~• Not be in-situ concrete or any asphalt material, except as designated crossovers and Council footpaths.~~
- ~~• Only be made safe after any required verge works. All cost associated with the reinstatement of treatments is the responsibility of the property owner.~~

### **5.1 Activity Centres/Precincts**

To allow for the urban form to be renewed consistently, the City has several designated areas known as Activity Centres or Precincts as determined in the Local Planning Scheme. Designs for these areas shall be submitted for approval to the City to meet the guidelines/ masterplans/ or visions for verges and streetscapes within these areas.

## **6. Structures**

Permanent and non-permanent structures are not allowed on the verge without written approval from the City, including block or retaining walls.



## **7. Crossover**

All crossovers are required to comply with the City's Path and Crossover Policy (CP – 033).  
~~All crossovers are required to comply with the City's "Specification for concrete vehicle crossovers".~~

## **8. Compliance**

If the verge is deemed non-compliant ~~to all or a part of this policy~~, the City shall notify the resident/owner ~~twice~~, asking for rectification work to be carried out. If rectification does not occur in the allocated timeframe, without prior notification, the City will arrange for the works to be carried out and invoice the full cost to the property owner.

## **9. Maintenance and Reinstatement**

There is no requirement from the City or any other service provider, to rectify damage to irrigation, planting, turf or hard surfacing after maintenance works have been completed affecting the verge. The verge will be made safe but there is no requirement to return it to its original state.

Where feasible, residents will be advised, prior to works commencing, to allow time to relocate/remove any item. Please note that this may not always be possible depending on the nature of the works required.



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#### **References that may be applicable to this Policy**

Legislative Requirements: The Local Government Act 1995 'Thoroughfare and Public Places Local Law'

Procedure, Process Maps, Work Instructions: N/A

Other Plans, Frameworks, Documents Applicable to Policy: Crossover Policy  
Footpath Policy  
Tree Policy  
Local Planning Scheme

Delegated Authority No: N/A

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Procedure, Process Maps, Work Instructions: N/A

Other Plans, Frameworks, Documents Applicable to Policy: N/A

Delegated Authority No: N/A

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#### **ORIGIN/AUTHORITY**

#### **ITEM NO.**

#### **REVIEWS**

Ordinary Meeting of Council	21/05/2013	T13/3385
Ordinary Meeting of Council	10/12/2013	T13/3441
Ordinary Meeting of Council	17/11/2015	T15/3673
Ordinary Meeting of Council	21/11/2017	T17/3769
<u>Ordinary Meeting of Council</u>	<u>19/11/2019</u>	<u>T19/3827</u>