

HUME CITY COUNCIL

Residential Nature Strip Policy

Policy reference No:	POL/194
File No:	HCC15/190
Strategic objective:	1.3 Safe and well-maintained places
Adopted by Council:	15 June 2021
Re-Adopted:	12 March 2024
Date for review:	June 2028
Responsible officer:	Manager City Parks and Open Spaces
Department:	City Parks and Open Spaces

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Council is committed to taking pride in the appearance of Hume City through shared responsibility for maintenance and enhancement of nature strips on roadsides.
- 1.2 Council supports residents enhancing and maintaining nature strips when done in a manner that is safe, is not detrimental to the local amenity, sustainable and compliant with relevant legislation.
- 1.3 It is the responsibility of residents/property owners to maintain the nature strip abutting their property (on all sides of the property) in a manner that provides for safe and unhindered movement, and this normally entails activities such as regular mowing, edging, weeding and the removal of litter
- 1.4 Council will only undertake works on nature strips to make safe following evidence of damage to the nature strip by a Council vehicle or in cases where there is a significant risk to the community eg. Sink hole, or the nature strip is in such a condition that it cannot be maintained by the resident
- 1.5 It is illegal to park a vehicle on a nature strip anywhere in Victoria and offenders may be issued an infringement notice under Road Safety Road Rules 2009, rule no 197.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of the Policy is to provide guidance to residents wishing to undertake personalised landscape works on Council Residential Nature Strips.
- 2.2 The Policy provides guidance on how Council will address non-compliant landscape works on Nature Strips.
- 2.3 The Policy provides clarity that Residents and property owners are expected to maintain the nature strip abutting their property.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 The Policy applies to landscape works on Council Residential Nature Strips.
- 3.2 The Policy does not apply to rural roads or roads where Council is not the Responsible Road Authority including Arterial Roads and Freeways.
- 3.3 It also does not apply to works undertaken by Council, utility authorities and Victorian and Federal Governments.

4. OBJECTIVES:

- 4.1 To ensure a safe, sustainable, and consistent approach to the design, maintenance and selection of materials used on residential nature strips throughout the City with reference to current Council guidelines.
- 4.2 Provide clarity to Hume residents about the management, maintenance and governance of Residential Nature Strips in the municipality.
- 4.3 To provide separate guidelines to residents on suitable landscape treatments, public safety and asset protection.

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5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

5.1

- 5.1.1 Required maintenance includes regular mowing, edging, weeding and the removal of litter

5.2 Consent to undertake landscape works on Council Nature Strips

- 5.2.1 A person undertaking landscape works on a Council Nature Strip as the property owner, or on behalf of the property owner is required to apply for a *Consent to Works Within a Hume Road Reserve* permit under the Road Management Act.
- 5.2.2 Council will consider applications for landscape works on Council Nature Strips in accordance with Council's Residential Nature Strip Guidelines.

5.3 Non-compliant landscape works on Council Nature Strips

- 5.3.1 Where Council becomes aware of non-compliant and/or unsafe landscape works on a Council Nature Strip and where the works do not comply with the Residential Nature Strip Guidelines, Council may:
- a) invite the resident/property owner to bring the works into compliance with the Guidelines;
 - b) Where this is unsuccessful undertake enforcement action; and
 - c) Where Council cannot identify the responsible person or, the identified person fails to bring the landscape works into compliance with the Guidelines, Council shall remove the landscape works and topsoil and seed or apply a mulch layer to the area as appropriate and shall seek costs from the property owner.

5.4 Damage to a nature strip

- 5.4.1 If the nature strip has been damaged because of building or other work at their property, the property owner, contractor or builder is responsible for repairs.
- 5.4.2 Utility companies that supply water, gas, electricity, and telecommunications may require access to a nature strip to perform maintenance work. The utility company is responsible for reinstating the nature strip but are only required to backfill with soil and seed with grass. There is no guarantee that these utility companies will replace landscaping such as plants, gravel and mulch to match the condition prior to maintenance work. Council will not be responsible for reinstatement.
- 5.4.3 The property owner is ultimately responsible maintaining the nature strip abutting their property in a manner that provides for safe and unhindered movement.

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6. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Nature Strip - is the land that is within the boundaries of a road (other than the shoulders of the road) which is not a roadway or pathway as stated in the Road Management Act 2004.

Council Residential Nature Strip – is Nature Strip on a road listed on Council's Register of Public Roads adjacent to residential land use.

Personalised Landscape Works – landscape works on a Council Residential Nature Strip that comply with Council's Residential Nature Strip Landscaping Guidelines

Other terms shown in capitals are defined by the Road Management Act 2004.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

7.1 Legislative requirements

- a) Road Management Act 2004.
- b) Local Government Act 2020

7.2 Hume City Council:

- a) Local Law Number 1
- b) Road Management Plan
- c) Register of Public Roads
- d) Residential Nature Strip Landscaping Guidelines
- e) Sustainable Gardening Handbook
- f) Nature Strip Landscaping and Planting Information Sheet

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