



# GUIDELINES FOR LANDSCAPING ON COUNCIL NATURE STRIPS

APPLICATION FORM INCLUDED

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## GENERAL

Nature strips provide a broad range of benefits to residents and the community with trees for shade, cooling and beautifying the streetscape. Council has limited resources to maintain nature strips in residential areas, and some property owners have expressed a desire to develop and maintain the Council-owned area (the nature strip) in front of their residence to a different standard than the service level provided by Council to enhance their property and streetscape.

Nature strip landscaping requires Council approval, and applications will be assessed against these guidelines to ensure public safety. This includes safe pedestrian access for all members of the community and maintenance of safe sight lines for traffic movement which enable property access, and commitment to maintenance for weed control and aesthetics.

Council will not subsidise or assist with the development or ongoing maintenance of nature strips.

Service Authorities have access and rights over this portion of the road reserve, in line with Legislation and/or agreements with Council. The nature strip area may be occupied (above or below the ground) by the following;

- Electricity underground/overhead wiring, pits and poles
- Telecommunications/NBN wiring, pits and poles
- Water mains and connections
- Sewer mains and connections
- Council infrastructure, including stormwater drainage systems (including the concrete kerbing) footpaths, street furniture, signage, bus shelters and street trees

## DEVELOPMENT

The Local Government Act 1999 requires that all private development of the nature strip has Council approval. Property owners may be given approval to landscape their nature strip areas if the following requirements of Council are achieved:

- Pedestrian access (firm surface) along the nature strip area in preference to walking on the roadway if no footpath is provided on either side of the road.
- Traffic sight line distances including clear vision of children in the nature strip area or driveways
- Access to existing services is maintained
- Provision for and protection of Council Street Trees, including tree roots
- The responsibility for ongoing maintenance rests with the property owner. The landscaping may be removed by Council at any time where adequate maintenance is not carried out

## NATURE STRIP TREATMENTS

The following nature strip treatments may be permitted, providing they are permeable to water and are suitable for safe pedestrian access;

- Mulch
- Rubble/gravel
- Low plants (maximum 500mm height).
- Permeable paving (to be constructed to Council's standards and manufacturers specifications)
- Turf (not irrigated)

The following nature strip treatments are not permitted and will not be approved;

- Raised edging or items which may obstruct pedestrian movement.
- Plants that are sharp or hazardous, recognised environmental weeds, or considered inappropriate to the theme of the streetscape.
- Plants which could be expected to grow taller than 500mm or spread beyond the nature strip
- Artificial turf (plastic grass) which is impermeable and requires a compacted rubble base
- Fully impervious membrane under mulch (such as black plastic). Weed matting that allows exchange of air and water is a permitted treatment

## PLANTING

All planting must consider the needs and conditions of Council and various Service Authorities as well as the requirement to ensure clear pedestrian access along the nature strip area where no footpath is constructed on either side of the road.

*For more information on plant species selection, please contact our front desk on 08 8551 0500.*

**Council's first preference is to use local native plant species where possible.**

Where this is not a preferred option of the resident, plants should be 'water-wise' (and frost resistant) and preferably Australian native. They should fit in well with the surrounding streetscape and gardens and should not be vigorous-growing or weedy. Annual plants should not generally be used unless the resident is committed to maintaining these on a regular basis.

The use of sharp or otherwise hazardous plants will not be supported.

The streetscape is an important part of the public realm, and the co-ordination of plantings is an important aspect of Council works. If no street trees are present, provision must be made for the future planting of trees on all property frontages generally at a rate of 1 tree per frontage.

Existing street trees will not be removed for nature strip development works, and all nature strip development must accommodate and protect existing street trees, including tree roots.



## **SYNTHETIC TURF**

Council does not consider synthetic turf (plastic grass) an appropriate treatment for Council nature strips. These materials absorb heat and are not permeable so increase stormwater run-off and prevent air and water entering nature strip soil, leading to the decline of street trees.

## **SOLID CONSTRUCTION**

Council does not permit structures such as fences, walls and letterboxes within the nature strip area.

## **FOOTPATH CONSTRUCTION**

Any development of a nature strip without an existing footpath must allow for the possible future construction of a 1.5 metre wide footpath by Council.

## **REMOVAL OR MODIFICATION OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT**

Where any nature strip has been landscaped and Council considers that the nature strip development could cause or is causing a hazard or obstruction to the public or Service Authority, then Council may require the development to be modified or removed.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For more information regarding nature strip landscaping please contact the Environment and Infrastructure Department on 08 8551 0500.

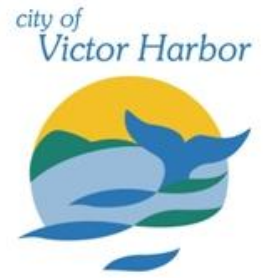


## PROCEDURE FOR APPROVAL

- Read through the Nature strip Landscaping Guidelines and if further information is required please contact the Environment and Infrastructure Department on 08 8551 0500.
- Complete the attached Application to Alter Nature Strip Form.
- Applications may only be submitted by Property Owners. Tenants wishing to develop the nature strip area are to consult with the property owner.
- The application will be assessed taking into account its suitability for the site and the safety of the community.
- Council will then respond in writing, notifying the applicant of the outcome and/or of any alterations that may be required. This documentation will be recorded for future reference.
- The expenses associated with the alterations as well as the maintenance of the nature strip will be the sole responsibility of the property owner.
- If the condition of the nature strip is altered in any way, other than the approved development, Council must be notified immediately.

(Application form available on next page)

For further information/design ideas and a planting guide to help you improve your Nature Strip and make the City of Victor Harbor more beautiful please refer to "A Greening guide for your Nature Strip" document available on our website.



# APPLICATION TO ALTER A NATURE STRIP

Name of Property Owner/s:

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I hereby apply for permission to landscape the nature strip area of the property I own at:

Property Address: .....

Postal Address: .....

Phone: (home) ..... Phone: (mobile) .....

Email Address: .....

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Details of contractor engaged to do all or part of the works, if not by the owner:

Name/Company Name: .....

Phone: (home) ..... Phone: (mobile) .....

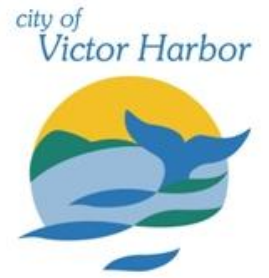
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## NATURE STRIP LANDSCAPING TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Applicant agrees to the following:

1. To provide a plan illustrating the proposed nature strip landscaping
2. To ensure that works within the nature strip will not create a public risk
3. To ensure that the landscaping works do not cause sight-line issues for vehicles, cyclists or pedestrians
4. To indemnify Council against all actions/claims whatsoever for bodily injury and/or damage to property arising out of the development and/or maintenance of the nature strip (excluding works undertaken by Council).
5. If the condition of the nature strip is altered in any other way than the approved development, Council must be notified immediately.
6. To accept full responsibility for the maintenance of the nature strip. In the event the nature strip landscaping is not maintained to the satisfaction of the Council it may be removed at any time.



**Detailed description of the proposed works, plant species and materials to be used**

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**Site plan (submit as attachment if additional space is required)**

I have read and agree to the terms and conditions for the landscaping and maintenance of the nature strip area, to which all works will comply with the Nature strip Landscaping Guidelines and will commence only following written approval from Council.

Signature of Property Owner: .....

Date: .....



*Office use only:*

**Open Spaces Group Leader Assessment:**

Comments:

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Approved: YES / NO

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_