

VERGE TREATMENT

Previous policy number: 2.2.18

Policy Statement

This policy will guide residents, developers, and contractors in achieving safe, water wise, visually appealing, and compliant new verge treatments across the Town of Mosman Park.

Policy Details

The verge is considered to be the land between the street kerb and private property boundary. The main purpose of the verge is to house utility services (above and below ground), provide space for pedestrian footpaths, crossovers, and support street trees.

Under the Local Law entitled *Activities on Thoroughfares and Trading in Thoroughfare and Public Places*, as a sub-set of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Town has delegated the responsibility of the maintenance of verges to the adjoining owner/occupier. Street trees remain solely under the care, control, and management of the Town of Mosman Park.

Residents are encouraged to consult the *Western Suburbs Greening Plan Guide: Wildflowers and Other Local Plants for Your Garden*, the *West Coastal Local Plant* brochure, and the Water Corporation's Plant Selection Tool available on the Town's website.

Policy Positions

Approvals and Controls

The Town requires a completed Verge Landscaping Application which includes a design (hand drawn or otherwise) showing what is proposed, current site features, proposed plant species, materials, and more. If the application is part of a strata, a supporting letter from the strata manager is required.

In the application, residents are asked to indemnify the Town for works in the development of the verge, as well as the ongoing maintenance.

Residents are asked to consult and include information relevant to the Utility Provider's Code of Practice, Dial Before You Dig, and other as appropriate.

For verges in a Bushfire Prone Area, as declared by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, residents must ensure that the verge is developed in accordance with the State Planning Policy 3.7 Planning in Bushfire Prone Areas guidelines.

Design Considerations

While turfed verges are supported by the Town, preference is given to low water use native verge gardens.

A setback of at least 0.5m should be accommodated when adjacent to kerbs and footpaths are present. Verges without a footpath should allow for 1.5m from the road kerb for safe pedestrian access. Plant species with a mature height of around 0.6m are suggested to prevent against visual obstructions for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians.

Street trees should be provided for in the verge design, however these remain under the care, control, and management of the Town unless otherwise authorised.

Soil Preparation and Site Works

Suitable soil and site preparation is an essential part of a successful verge landscape. Verge levels should be corrected to ensure safe pedestrian movement, and the ability for materials (such as mulch) to be adequately contained in the verge boundaries.

Soil improvements may be required prior to planting to ensure healthy and sustained plant growth. It is recommended, even for native verge landscapes, that improvements are incorporated into the top soil to a depth of approximately 300mm.

Prior to removing any significant tree roots (greater than 50mm), or progressing with any works that may affect verge trees, residents are required to contact the Town for advice, conditions, and relevant approvals.

Plant Selection

The Town offers residents a number of resources to assist with plant selection which are available on the Town's website. Species that are declared weeds, prickly, poisonous, or known to cause allergic reactions are not permitted. Plant species should reach a maximum height of, or should be suitable to be kept at, 0.6m in order to avoid visual obstructions.

If turf is to be installed, it is suggested that warm season varieties that are low water demanding and suitable to Western Australia's harsh climate are to be used. More information on suitable turf varieties can be found on the Town's website.

Approved Materials

The Town permits up to one third of the total verge area (excluding the crossover) to be hardstand. Approved hardstand materials include paving, limestone, artificial turf, and other man made materials. Artificial turf is not permitted as an entire verge treatment. Loose gravels, large rocks, and other obstructions are not permitted due to risk by way of presenting slip or trip hazards or the chance to become projectiles during maintenance.

Irrigation and Watering

The Town encourages residents to install low water use landscapes and low water use turf. Details of proposed irrigation should be included in the Verge Landscaping Application. Verge watering regimes must comply with water restrictions as determined by the Water Corporation. Where required, watering exemptions should be obtained from the Water Corporation to facilitate the establishment of new installations.

Maintenance

Ongoing verge maintenance is the responsibility of the adjacent resident as outlined in the Local Law entitled *Activities on Thoroughfares and Trading in Thoroughfare and Public Places*. The Town strongly encourages residents to keep adjacent verges well maintained to allow for safe pedestrian movement and to maintain maximum street appeal for the entire community and visitors to the town. Footpaths and roads should be kept clear of vegetation and other materials emanating from the verge (i.e. mulch, spent flowers).

Where a verge is deemed to be neglected, or has no adjacent owner/occupier, the Town will intervene at the direction of the Executive Manager of Technical Services. Intervention may include issuing a works request to the adjacent property owner/occupier, or initiating maintenance by the Town with costs recovered from the adjoining property owner.

Water Wise Verge Incentive and Rebate Programs

The Town offers two verge incentive and rebate programs;

Residential verge landscaping incentive:

Residents wishing to create a water wise verge landscape, will receive financial assistance from the Town at a 1:1 ratio to a maximum of \$350. Receipts relating to the expenses must be provided to the Town as well as before and after pictures of the verge. Intention to claim this incentive must be first indicated on the Verge Landscaping Application to be vetted by the Town.

Developer verge treatment rebate:

Developers will be eligible to claim a rebate from the Town of \$400 if a verge upgrade is undertaken as part of a new build or renovation. The Town will increase this rebate to \$600 if the verge upgrade is a water wise native garden, rather than turf, mulch, or other. Receipts relating to the expenses must be provided to the Town as well as before and after pictures of the verge to be eligible for rebates.

Definitions

Verge: The land between the roadside kerb line and the private property boundary.

Verge landscape: Verge land that has been planted, turfed, or received other similar installations.

Hardstand: An area in the verge that has been paved or stabilised with alternative materials suitable for parking, or otherwise.

Vegetation: Any deliberate or desired landscaping treatment, including but not limited to; street trees, bushland areas, park trees/shrubs or any other flora, native or exotic.

Governance References

Statutory Compliance	<i>Local Government Act 1995</i> <i>Activities on Thoroughfares and Trading in Thoroughfare and Public Places</i>
Organisational Compliance	Street Tree Policy 2.2.7

Policy Administration

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Technical Services		Executive Manager Technical Services
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2		
3		