



## **NATURESTRIP LANDSCAPE POLICY & GUIDELINES**



Council will permit residents to plant the naturestrip in front of their residence, subject to receiving a Naturestrip Landscape Permit.

### **Rationale**

Council supports residents providing an alternative to a mown grass naturestrip, at their own cost, because:

- some residents are unable to maintain (mow) a grassed naturestrip;
- it provides residents with a choice about the type of naturestrip; and
- there are some environmental advantages of a planted naturestrip.

### **Naturestrip Landscape Guidelines**

This policy provides guidelines for residents wanting to plant out the naturestrip in front of their property.

### **Planting Details**

Residents will be able to plant out their naturestrips with a range of ground cover plants and a range of low growing shrubs, including herbs and vegetables (some suggestions are listed in Appendix 1).

Council may consider other plants as suitable, however Council will not permit the use of plants that are:

- woody plants;
- prickly or spiky plants;
- shrubs that grow higher than 50cm which hide line of sight; and
- weed species.

On the kerb side (to 1 metre from back of kerb) Residents will be required to plant ground covers only, this is in order to make provision for the opening of vehicle doors and passenger access. Corner block planting will be limited to ground cover plants only to ensure a good line of sight for motorists and pedestrians.

Planted naturestrips must provide suitable space for the provision of refuse and recycling bins.

Council will not permit landscaping of naturestrips in areas where there is considerable need to provide short term car parking (e.g. surrounding the Footscray Business District and the Western Hospital). In all cases, due consideration will be given for the need to provide safe and suitable access to the footpath for people exiting a parked car.

Residents are not permitted to plant or remove a street tree. Council's Street Tree Co-ordinator can arrange for the planting of a suitable street tree, which will conform to Council's Street Tree Strategy. Council's Street Tree Co-ordinator can also investigate and advise on whether it is appropriate for a tree to be removed. Council will plant the trees or remove/prune the trees as required.

## **Mulch Details**

Two mulch types can be used.

1. Fine gravel mulches (75mm depth) such as washed granitic sand or Lilydale toppings.
2. Organic mulch (75mm depth) such as a graded bark or multi-bark mix that is resistant to disturbance by wind and rain.

## **Paving Details**

Any pavers or stepping stones provided will need to be a non-slip surface. No tripping hazards are permitted, so all paving levels will need to be flush with the finished mulch level.

## **Irrigation Systems Not Permitted**

Council will not permit irrigation systems to be installed in the naturestrips. One of the benefits of a planted naturestrip is that it can require less water than conventional turf grasses.

## **Rocks and Retaining Walls Not Permitted**

Council will not permit rocks, bluestone pitchers, railway sleepers or retaining walls to be installed in the naturestrip. These items are all potentially tripping hazards so can not be included in the naturestrip.

## **Excavation & Cultivation by Hand Only**

Residents will not be permitted to use mechanical means of excavation (bobcat/dingo) or cultivation (rotary hoe) due to the infrastructure that may be underground or the damage that may occur to street trees.

Hand (spade or fork) excavation and cultivation will only be permitted. Hand digging may expose some underground services. The Owner/Occupier undertaking the works is advised to contact 'Dial Before You Dig' Tel 1100.

The Owner/Occupier is responsible for erecting safety fencing and signage during landscaping works.

The Owner/Occupier is responsible for repairing any damage to infrastructure caused by any landscaping works.

## **Utilities and Maintenance Work**

Organisations that supply water, gas, electricity and telecommunications may require access to the naturestrip to do maintenance work. The utility organisations are required to make good the naturestrip following their maintenance work. Council cannot guarantee that any of the maintenance contractors will replace plants and mulch in the same condition as prior to maintenance work.

## **Public Liability**

It is recommended that the owner/occupier extend their house and contents public liability insurance to include naturestrip landscaping.

Residents are reminded that they plant the naturestrip at their own expense and own risk.

## **Maintenance Responsibilities**

Residents are required to keep the naturestrip in a well maintained and safe condition at all times including:

- Plants are to be pruned to a height of no more than 50 cm at all times.
- Plants are to be pruned so that they do not protrude onto pathways, driveways or beyond the back of kerb.
- The naturestrip is to be kept free of weeds and rubbish.
- A mulch cover is to be maintained over the naturestrip.
- No mulch is allowed onto the footpath, driveways or in the kerb and channel.
- The naturestrip is to be free of any tripping hazards and any protruding objects.

## **Approval Process for a Naturestrip Landscape Permit**

1. Residents will be required to complete a Naturestrip Landscape Permit application form, including:
  - provide a list of plants to be used;
  - mulch to be used;
  - other relevant details;
2. On receipt of the application form a Council officer will assess and approve the Naturestrip Landscape Permit, provided it conforms to the above conditions.
3. Resident must commence the naturestrip works within one month and complete the works within 3 months.
4. A Council officer will inspect completed naturestrip landscape works and confirm that the naturestrip is safe.
5. A register of Naturestrip Landscape Permits will be kept.

## **Non Compliance of Naturestrip Landscape/Maintenance Process**

Council will take action to rectify problems in relation to tripping hazards or safety issues. For minor issues Council Officer(s) will write to the relevant property owner requesting that they attend to the problem. The property owner will be requested to rectify the specific problem by a set date (up to 28 days, dependent on perceived risk of problem items)

For more serious and urgent problems requiring rectification, or for failure to take action following an initial notice, a delegated Council officer may issue an on-the-spot infringement notice (up to 20 penalty units), or a verbal warning.

Any fines could be issued under General Purposes Local Law 2015. Part 11, Clause 37. Obstructions on Roads and Council Land 37 (1) (c).

## Appendix 1 – Suggested species suitable for naturestrip planting

### Indigenous: ground covers (up to 15 cm height)

Botanical name	Common Name	Description
<i>Atriplex semibaccata</i>	Berry saltbush	Prostrate with succulent red fruits.
<i>Calocephalus citreus</i>	Lemon Beauty Heads	Hardy perennial herb with silver grey leaves and small lemon flowers in summer.
<i>Convolvulus erubescens</i>	Pink bindweed	Bright pink flowers.
<i>Dichondra repens</i>	Kidney weed	Mat forming herb with kidney shaped leaves.
<i>Disphyma crassifolium</i>	Rounded noon flower	Succulent ground cover with masses of bright pink flowers.
<i>Einadia nutans</i>	Nodding saltbush	Trailing perennial with red or orange berries.
<i>Enchylaena tomentose</i>	Ruby saltbush	Low herb with fleshy leaves and red or yellow succulent berry. Koori food plant.
<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	False sarsaparilla	Hardy ground cover/climber with purple pea flowers in late winter-spring.
<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>	Running postman	Prostrate ground cover with scarlet pea flowers in spring-summer.
<i>Myoporum parvifolium</i>	Creeping boobialla	Fast growing spotted white flowers in spring.
<i>Scleranthus biflorus</i>	Twin flowered knawel	Green 'moss' like cushion, needs moisture.
<i>Viola hederacea</i>	Native violet	Small white & mauve flowers most of year. Suitable for shady and moist areas.

### Exotic & native: ground covers (up to 15 cm height)

<i>Arctotis sp.</i>	African daisy	Large daisy like flowers, different foliage.
<i>Dimorphoteka ecloni</i>	Veldt daisy	Purple daisy like flowers.
<i>Festuca glauca</i>	Blue fescue	10 cm blue-green grass in tufts.
<i>Grevillea species</i>	Eg. 'Poorinda Royal Mantle'	A dense matt forming ground cover with showy flowers.
<i>Ophiopogon japonicus</i>	Mondo grass	Dwarf grass, other cultivars may be appropriate.
<i>Stachys byzantina</i>	Lamb's ear	Silver grey foliage, flower heads need pruning after flowering.

**NOTE: The above list is a guide and other plants that conform to the Naturestrip Guidelines can be proposed.**

**Indigenous: low growing shrubs (up to 50cm height)**

<i>Brachyscome dentata</i>	Golden (lobe seed ) daisy	30 cm white daisy flower.
<i>Brachyscome multifida</i>	Cut leaf daisy	30 cm purple daisy flower.
<i>Calocephalus lacteus</i>	Milky beauty heads	Sprawling perennial with aromatic leaves and cream flowers in summer.
<i>Chrysocephalum apiculatum</i>	Common everlasting	30 cm golden flowers most of the year.
<i>Chrysocephalum semipapposum</i>	Clustered everlasting	60 cm golden flowers in spring.
<i>Craspedia variabilis</i>	Common billy-button	50 cm bright yellow flowers.
<i>Dianella revoluta</i>	Spreading Flax Lilly	Very hardy perennial lily with deep blue flowers on stems
<i>Dicanthium sericium</i>	Silky blue grass	Erect tussock forming grass with blue-grey leaves & numerous silky flower spikes in summer
<i>Dichelachne crinita</i>	Long hair plume grass	Fine leafed tussock grass with attractive cream coloured plumes on long stems.
<i>Helichrysum sp aff. rutidolepis</i>	Pale everlasting	Yellow button flowers spring to autumn.
<i>Lobelia pratioides</i>	Poison lobelia	Spreading herb blue flowers, prefers damp.
<i>Minuria leptophylla</i>	Minnie daisy	20 cm with white or mauve daisy flowers.
<i>Poa sp.</i>	Tussock grasses	Some species may be suitable.
<i>Podolepis jacoides</i>	Showy podolepis	20 cm yellow flowers.
<i>Pycnosorus chrysanthes</i>	Golden billy-button	30 cm golden globular flowers.
<i>Pycnosorus globosus</i>	Drumsticks	Silvery foliage with large globular yellow flowers.
<i>Themeda triandra</i>	Kangaroo Grass	Purple-green foliage in spring turning pale rusty colour over summer.
<i>Wahlenbergia communis</i>	Tufted bluebell	Bright blue bell shaped flowers in spring – autumn.

**Exotic & native: low growing shrubs (up to 50 cm height)**

<i>Agapanthus 'Snow storm'</i>	Dwarf agapanthus	Dwarf form, white flowers.
<i>Anigozanthus 'Little Joey'</i>	Dwarf Kangaroo paw	Other dwarf cultivars may be appropriate.
<i>Coprosma acerosa</i>		Hardy evergreen shrub to 300mm.
<i>Cotoneaster microphylla</i>		Prostrate shrub with red berries.
<i>Dianella sp.</i>	Flax Lilly	Dwarf cultivars may be appropriate.
<i>Juniperus horizontalis 'Bar Harbour'</i>		Low shrub dark green shrub.
<i>Luecophyta brownii 'Silver nugget'</i>	Cushion bush	Hybrid dwarf form of the local coastal cushion bush, grey foliage.

**NOTE: The above list is a guide and other plants that conform to the Naturestrip Guidelines can be proposed.**



### SKETCH OF PROPOSED NATURESTRIP LANDSCAPE

Please show all existing features eg. Street trees, poles, crossovers etc. Photographs may also be submitted to show existing conditions.

Applicant's Signature: .....

Date: .....

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### APPLICATION APPROVED

Signature: .....

Name: .....  
Council Officer

Date: .....

**Note:** A ten working day processing period applies to this application.  
All information received will only be used for the issuing of this permit.

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Any inaccurate information supplied on this application renders the permit null and void