



VERGE AND STREET TREE POLICY

Document Reference No:	GD/	Version:	One
Service Unit:	Shire Services		
Author:	Governance Officer		
Responsible Director:	Director of Shire Services		
Authorisation Date:		Review Date:	
Minute No:			

Printing Disclaimer

If you are viewing a printed copy of this document it may not be current. Printed copies of this document are not controlled.

Before using a printed copy of this document, verify that it is the most current version by referencing Council's Document Management System.

Purpose

The purpose of the Verge and Street Tree Policy is to support Central Darling Shire Council (CDSC)'s Community Strategic Plan objective of visually attractive streetscapes by providing guidance for verges and driveways that are created, installed and maintained by the resident.

CDSC encourages community participation in creating and caring for verge areas adjacent to their property. Planting on the verge needs to be balanced against the need for pedestrian access, safety, utility services, public infrastructure, garbage collection and kerb-side parking.

Application

This policy applies to CDSC managed land that is between the private property boundary and the road.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Driveway – also known as a Vehicle Access Crossing, is an access point to enable a vehicle to cross from the road to an adjacent property. A driveway crosses the verge from the road to the property boundary.

Shared Zones and Cycleways – refers to a street section where pedestrians, bike users and vehicles share the space.

Verge – a street verge is the area of public land located between the property boundary and the road carriageway. This area is usually grassed and may contain street trees, footpaths, street furniture and other above or below ground infrastructure. It is also commonly referred to as a nature strip.

Verge Gardens – plantings on public land situated on the street verge, which are maintained by residents or business operators.

Provisions

Grass nature strips and verges are expected to be mowed regularly by residents and kept neat and tidy such that they contribute to the general appearance of the street. A resident may apply to replace the grass verge or nature strip outside their property with low maintenance plantings or garden beds. A written application must be made to Council, and a written response will be provided to the applicant.

If Council agrees to the replacement of grass verges/nature strips outside private properties with low maintenance plantings or garden beds, Council will not contribute financially to the cost of this work or on-going maintenance. This applies regardless of change of ownership/occupancy of a property.

The guidelines for CDSC's requirements are below.

Safe Pedestrian Access

Verge gardens and driveways must be designed for safe and equitable access for all users of the street or public domain.

Shared Zones and Cycleways

If you would like to install a garden or driveway within a shared zone, please contact CDSC first to discuss your proposal. This can be by email to council@centraldarling.nsw.gov.au or via a Customer Service Request (telephone or online).

Design and Functionality

Planting selection should integrate with the natural environment, be sustainable, enduring and resilient. Verge plantings and driveways must be maintained to avoid endangering or inconveniencing the community and contribute to the amenity of the neighbourhood. It is the resident or business owner's responsibility to maintain the verge in a safe, clean and tidy way to ensure it is free from weeds, disease and hazards.

Utilities and Authorities

The Shire's streets accommodate infrastructure services such as water, drainage, electricity, sewerage, lighting and telecommunications. Planting design should allow for these utilities, and you are not to cover or bury any access pit used to serve existing infrastructure.

Before planning gardens or driveways, contact Dial Before You Dig, a free service for locating utilities. This is a legal requirement before commencing any excavation on the verge.

Individuals and companies are liable for any damage they cause to utilities. Utility service providers and or CDSC may maintain or upgrade their infrastructure within the verge, which may result in removal or disturbance of a verge garden. It is the resident or business owner's responsibility to make good and repair their verge garden because of any impact caused during these works.

Neighbourhood Support

The verge is a public space. Although no formal neighbourhood notification is needed, CDSC encourages you to talk to your neighbours and inform them of your plans prior to commencing.

Plant Selection

Plants must not exceed 1m in height at maturity when planted on the verge. Mature plants must be pruned to maintain this maximum allowable height. Plants growing above the height of 1m will be dealt with under the provisions for street trees.

Planting of invasive plant species or noxious weeds is prohibited.

Street Trees

If you would like to apply for a street tree for the verge in front of your property, please submit a request to CDSC. This can be by email to council@centraldarling.nsw.gov.au or via a Customer Service Request (telephone or online).

Where residents undertake to maintain and water trees CDSC will provide, within budget constraints, an appropriate plant.

Two trees may be allocated per 20m allotment frontage and increased pro-rata for wider allotments.

Where planting of street tree/s are approved, trees will be placed on a tree planting program, undertaken by CDSC from March to August of each year.

Council staff will plant street trees, as other material may need to be installed (e.g. root barrier, stakes or tree guards).

No trees may be planted in public reserves including roads and parks without approval.

Planting locations and species will be determined by Council with due regard to the impact on utilities both existing and proposed, pedestrian, cycle and vehicular traffic needs, and the streetscape.

Endemic trees will generally be preferred; however, the height and structure of the trees need to be taken into consideration when selecting Eucalypt species.

Pruning shall be done in compliance with CDSC's Tree Pruning Procedure.

Council does not undertake roadside tree planting for rural areas.

Driveways

The cost of any driveway works is at the property owner's expense. Plan the location of your driveway to consider utilities. New driveways and alterations must be safe for both vehicles and pedestrians, not conflict with existing infrastructure such as signs, power poles and street trees, adequately manage stormwater and not create hazards within the verge area.

Working Safely on the Verge

Members of the public are responsible for their own safety while working on the verge. This means taking basic safety precautions such as wearing appropriate clothing and protective equipment, sun protection, and taking care with tools and materials. Do not store tools or materials on the verge, as they may cause a trip hazard.

Exclusions

Vegetation is not to overhang existing concrete footpaths.

Members of the public are not permitted to create gardens on median strips.

Street corners are to be kept clear of gardens, to ensure clear lines of sight and pedestrian/cyclist safety.

Gardens and driveways are not permitted within 0.5m of a power pole or 0.5m of any existing street tree trunk. Protection of existing street trees is to be maintained, and the excavation or disturbance of existing roots is prohibited. Soil, compost or mulch must be kept from contact with the bark or trunk of the street tree to protect the health of the tree. CDSC is responsible for the maintenance and removal of all trees on Council-managed land.

Verge gardens are not permitted within 15m on the approach side of a bus stop or 5m of the departure side.

Legislation

Crown Land Management Act 2016

Local Government Act 1993 S68

Roads Act 1993 S138

Related Documents

Tree Pruning Procedure

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the responsible Director to ensure compliance. Once adopted, it remains in force until it is reviewed by Council. It is to be reviewed approximately every two (2) years to ensure that it meets requirements, or sooner if the General Manager determines appropriate.

DRAFT