

PURPOSE

This policy sets out the responsibilities and expectations of Council and the community regarding maintaining nature strips in Glenorchy City, to:

- allow residents to replace the grass on their nature strips with other plants
- promote low water use plantings
- promote well-maintained and tidy nature strips that enhance the city streetscapes.
- allow property owners and occupiers some individual choice in the use and style of nature strips.
- minimise risk to the community from inappropriate use or management of nature strips.

whilst

- allowing pedestrian access and wheelie bin locations.
- protecting and maintaining Council and service providers infrastructure; and
- allowing kerbside parking of vehicles and door opening space.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all nature strips in the Glenorchy municipality that are owned or administered by Glenorchy City Council. It does not apply to rural road verges or roads which are not managed by Council, such as State controlled highways.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

Valuing Our Environment

Objective 3.1 Create a liveable and desirable City.

Strategy 3.1.3 Manage the City's transport network and the associated infrastructure to promote sustainability, accessibility, choice, safety and amenity for all modes of transport.

Leading Our Community

Objective 4.1 Govern in the best interests of our community

Strategy 4.1.1 Manage Council for maximum efficiency, accountability and transparency

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Footpaths Policy
- Tree Management Policy

- Appendix 1 - Preferred Plant Selection and Environmental Weeds List

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Acts	<i>Local Government (Highways) Act 1982</i> <i>Roads and Jetties Act 1935</i>
Regulations	N/A
Australian/International Standards	N/A

DEFINITIONS

Council means Glenorchy City Council

Landscaping means any form of plantings on a nature strip excluding grass, turf or street trees.

Nature Strip means Council owned or controlled land between a property boundary and a roadway, but not including a public footpath.

Owner means the legal owner of the property to which the nature strip pertains

Permit means written approval issued by Council for the purposes of this policy or a relevant by-law, including a letter, ticket, license, lease or other approval.

Services means water, gas, electrical or telecommunication infrastructure including but not limited to wiring, pipes, conduits, switches, boxes and covers.

Service Provider means TasWater, TasNetworks or any other legitimate electricity, gas, water or telco provider.

Soft Landscaping means plantings below 750mm in height, mulch, garden edging and borders.

Works means the landscaping and maintenance of the nature strip adjoining a property

BACKGROUND

Current rate revenues do not allow Council to maintain nature strips and Council recognises the benefits to householders of planting their nature strips with low maintenance or low water requiring plants. Council recognises the value of nature strips in enhancing properties and streetscapes and encourages owners and residents to take pride in maintaining them

Nature strips have multiple uses including accommodating infrastructure, enhancing streetscapes, providing pedestrian access and reducing stormwater run-off amongst others. Inappropriate works or use of nature strips can create health or safety risks or nuisance to others. In addition to this Policy, Council has a list of preferred plants and an environmental weeds list for owners/occupiers wishing to landscape a nature strip.

Council recognises that people lead increasingly busy lives and, in addition, wish to reduce their water usage, and that the planting of low maintenance, low water use plants on nature strips has become increasingly desirable for the residents of Glenorchy.

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the responsibility of property owners and/or occupants to maintain the nature strips adjacent to their property including weeding and mowing.

Works That Are Allowed on Nature Strips Without a Permit

1. Provided all other requirements of this policy are met, the following Works are allowed on nature strips without a Council permit:
 - a. planting, reseeding, and maintaining turf.
 - b. installing and maintaining a synthetic turf provided that the manufacturers' specifications are followed, and the turf is not a trip risk.
 - c. soft landscaping by the property owner, provided that:
 - i. plants are not allowed to grow higher than 750mm.
 - ii. no plant is thorny, hazardous or a weed plant as defined by the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment. Refer to Appendix 1 for preferred plant selection.
 - iii. enough space is provided for the correct placement of waste and recycling bins.
 - iv. if there is no footpath, a 1.5m strip must be provided for foot traffic alongside the kerb.
 - v. If there is parking along the kerb, a minimum of 0.6m strip must be provided for people to get in and out of vehicles.
 - vi. the plantings are regularly watered, weeded and pruned as often as necessary to retain the integrity of the planting with any dead plants removed promptly.
 - vii. organic mulch can be used up to 150mm deep that does not spill onto footpaths, driveways, roadways, etc.
 - viii. Garden edging and borders up to 150mm high can be used to ensure pants and mulch do not spill over.

2. The following items are required to be complied with for any soft landscaping:

- a. If you are not the owner of the property, the property owner's consent must be provided in writing.
- b. the consent of any adjoining owners must be provided prior to carrying out any soft landscaping.
- c. A Dial Before You Dig (DBYD) must be undertaken by all parties prior to any plantings or excavations are carried out in the nature strip, regardless of the depth.
- d. Check to ensure that the works are allowed and whether a permit is required.

Works on Nature Strips That Require a Permit

3. A permit from the Council is required to conduct any of the following works on a nature strip:

- a. soft landscaping that does not fully comply with this policy.
- b. landscaping a nature strip which contains an existing street tree.
- c. importing soil or reshaping the surface of the ground.
- d. excavation works deeper than 300mm.
- e. using any machinery for excavation or cultivation.
- f. installing an irrigation system.
- g. vegetable or fruit growing plants.
- h. climbing frames, plant stakes, compost bins and raised garden beds.
- i. planting trees.
- j. Plants that grow above a height of 750mm.

4. How to apply for a permit

- a. Permit applications must be in writing and include:
 - i. details of the proposed plants (what species will be planted and density).
 - ii. sketch plan showing property boundaries, any existing features (including footpath, driveway, street tree, other plants) and the proposed locations of plants,
 - iii. written permission of the property owner if the applicant is not the owner,
- b. If your works fall into this category (or if you are uncertain if they do) please contact Council on (03) 62166 800 to enquire about, or apply for, a permit.

Works That Are Not Allowed on Nature Strips

5. The following works are not allowed:
- a. landscaping that encroaches on or obstructs footpaths or roadways.
 - b. landscaping which creates a safety issue.
 - c. damage to any existing underground or aboveground infrastructure.
 - d. landscaping nature strips that are used as a bus stop.
 - e. hard landscaping being any building, structure or hard material, including walls, fences, concrete, asphalt, metals, railway sleepers, crushed brick, rocks, pavers, boulders and gravel or similar.
 - f. temporary or permanent electrical wiring (e.g., lighting of trees is not allowed).
 - g. covering, removing, or blocking access to service boxes or pit covers.
 - h. depositing lawn clippings, including around street trees.
 - i. the keeping of animals.
 - j. private letterboxes.
 - k. parking vehicles, boats, caravans, trailers, etc.

Rights of Council, Intervention, Unauthorised Work and Indemnity

6. If necessary, the Council may act, or require property owners to act, to prevent or minimise potential hazards (for instance fire risk, traffic risk from blocked visibility, etc.) resulting from the Works.
7. Where possible, Owners will be contacted and informed of works that Council intends to undertake. In emergencies, however, works may need to be undertaken without notice.
8. Where Council or a service provider undertakes works on a nature strip, it will reinstate the nature strip with grass, but will not replace any removed plants or infrastructure.
9. If unauthorised work is carried out on a nature strip, the Council may:
 - a. Issue a notice of non-compliance requiring a property owner to reinstate the nature strip to an acceptable standard; and/or
 - b. Remove all unauthorised works or vegetation and recover any costs from the property owner or occupier.
10. Council or a service provider, or their contractor or invitee, retains the right to undertake works on any nature strip including the planting of trees.

11. The Owner will be responsible for reinstating the nature strip to grass lawn if reinstatement is required by Council following a finding of unauthorised work.
12. Despite the fact all maintenance of the planted nature strip becomes the responsibility of the owner, Council reserves the right to maintain or make changes to the planted nature strip if it deems it reasonably necessary to do so.
13. Council, or a Service Provider, may enter the nature strip at any time to maintain, repair, alter, add to, or connect Services contained in the nature strip if Council or service provider deems it necessary to do so.
14. The Owner will be liable for any damage to Council's or other service providers infrastructure caused by planting or excavation.
15. To the maximum extent allowed by law, the Owner releases the Council from liability for, and indemnifies the Council against, any claim, action, damage, loss, liability, cost, or expense arising from the Owner's planting of the nature strip or from the actions of any invitee of the Owner.
16. Nature strip planting is carried out entirely at the risk of the Owner, and the Owner is put on notice that, at any time and for any reason, it is deemed by Council as necessary, the nature strip planting may be disturbed or removed. If it is deemed necessary to disturb or remove plantings the plantings will not be reinstated by Council and the owner will not be recompensed.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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