

Residential Verges Policy

1. Objectives

- a. To develop an attractive and safe streetscape.
- b. To discourage verge parking wherever alternatives exist.
- c. To encourage owners and occupiers of premises to maintain their street verges.
- d. To ensure that verge treatments comply with the Local Law relating to thoroughfares.
- e. To ensure that verge developments are not hazardous to pedestrians, cyclists or motorists.
- f. To encourage alternatives for verge treatments which remove or reduce the use of bore water, fertilisers, weedicides, pesticides and non-absorbent materials.
- g. To encourage the use of indigenous plant species.

2. Principles

- a. The road reserve area is under the control of the Town of Cottesloe but owners and occupiers are encouraged to maintain street verges.
- b. All developments on street verges must be safe at all times for the general public when using the road verge for normal, legal activities.
- c. The Town of Cottesloe plus a range of Service Authorities will impact on the road reserve from time to time with infrastructure construction and maintenance activities.
- d. With the reducing availability of mains water and bore water supplies, Council supports alternatives to reticulated verge lawns, particularly the use of indigenous plant species.

3. Issues

- a. All verges are affected by intermittent construction activities, to improve paths, drainage and roads, as well as for the maintenance of public services, for example, power, water, communications and sewer lines.
- b. Landscape designs for the road verge must have compliance standards to ensure 'extreme' or dangerous treatments do not occur.
- c. If plants larger than semi-prostrate species are to be planted, then the general maximum height allowed is 600mm, unless on a 40 metres wide road reserve where the maximum height is 1.5 metres, apart from street trees.
- d. Verge treatments undertaken by owners or occupants do not include street trees. All street trees are installed and maintained by the Town of Cottesloe.
- e. A permit is not needed for a grass lawn area.
- f. Verge treatments are not approved for the purpose of providing extra parking space on the verge.

- g. All verge treatments must comply with Council's *Activities on Thoroughfares and Trading in Thoroughfares and Public Places Local Law 2001*.
- h. The construction of tree houses, tree swings and the installation of play structures is not considered appropriate within the road reserve due to safety issues, but will be considered when an application for a permit is made for a structure, including private play equipment, with the permit to include applicable conditions.

4. Policy

4.1 The Town's Responsibilities

4.1.1 Inspection

Each verge development will be inspected by Engineering Services from time to time, to ensure that the development has been carried out in accordance with the foregoing Council Policy.

4.1.2 Breach

If any verge development does not comply with this policy, then the breach may be made good by the Town and the costs recovered from the owner or occupier.

4.1.3 Fees

The Town will not charge a fee for the inspection of verge developments.

4.2 The Owner's Responsibilities

- a. Accept all costs involved in the construction of the verge development.
- b. Keep the verge treatment in a safe and tidy condition.
- c. Ensure all permit conditions are met, as a result of a verge development, including the installation of private play equipment.
- d. Accept that the verge remains a public space and may be traversed by the public as and when required.
- e. Water or maintain the verge in such a manner as to not cause a nuisance to other people.
- f. Accept that the improvements automatically become the property of the Town of Cottesloe.
- g. Contact the Perth One Call System (Dial Before You Dig) on 1100 and locate all underground services prior to undertaking any works within the verge area and take all care to ensure that no damage is caused to underground services.

4.3 Species Selection

The Town of Cottesloe encourages the use of planting of native and in particular indigenous plants (plants naturally occurring within the Town of Cottesloe) within verge areas. Owners are free however to choose the species of plants planted within their verge and are not restricted to native or indigenous plants. All species of plants whether native or exotic must comply with the aforementioned clauses and be suitable for the location in which they are planted.

4.4 Procedure

No permit is required from Council for planting lawn on verges.

A permit is required for all other works in the verge such as garden beds, shrubs, kerbing, paving, retaining walls, pipelines and below ground reticulation systems. This shall be obtained by the owner/occupier submitting an application in writing with a sketch plan that shows the details of the proposal.

4.5 Landscape Design

Landscape designs must comply with the following conditions:

- a. Comply with the *Activities on Thoroughfares and Trading in Thoroughfares and Public Places Local Law 2001*.
- b. Provide adequate access to the letterbox for mail delivery.
- c. Provide unobstructed pedestrian access to existing signs, water meter, telecom pit and manhole covers.
- d. Where there is a bus stop, provide clear access of at least 1.2 metres wide around the bus stop, and between the footpath and the bus stop.
- e. Pathways through verge plants may be constructed of any solid material such as tree rings and stepping stones, providing they do not protrude above kerb level and are laid flush with the surrounding ground.
- f. Height and placement of plants must not obstruct slight distance for pedestrians and road users.
- g. On 20 metre wide road reserves, no plant shall exceed 600 mm in height. The same applies to intersections for sight clearance. On 40 metre wide road reserves, plants shall not exceed 600 mm in height two metres from the kerb line and from the property boundary. On these very wide road reserves plants are allowed up to 1.5 metres high in the centre of the verge width, ramping down to 600 mm high two metres from the kerb line and property boundary.
- h. Paving of generally only one third of the residential verge area, including the crossover, is permitted. Verges adjacent to approved commercial premises may exceed this providing the area is broken up with landscaping to adjacent areas or around approved street trees. All brick paving must have a header course on all edges.

- i. Retaining walls, rocks and sleepers are permitted only in special circumstances where difficult site conditions prevail.
- j. All garden kerbing shall be flush with the ground surface unless around garden beds.
- k. Bollards, star iron pickets, stakes, spikes or other objects that could cause injury to the public are not permitted.
- l. Materials that may cause a hazard to the public are not permitted. This includes loose gravel and pea gravel. Rocks and earth mounding are permitted in garden beds.
- m. Plants must not present a hazard to pedestrians, for example, cactus, and will not include species classified as declared weeds by the Department of Agriculture's *Agriculture and Related Resources Protection Act 1976*.
- n. Any polythene or impervious layer laid beneath the surface must be pierced with sufficient number of holes to ensure adequate drainage without runoff.
- o. In new developments where verges are grassed, provision is to be made for the reticulation to be connected to the domestic water supply on completion of the dwelling. No valves or controllers for reticulation are permitted in the verge.
- p. No fixed structures, including those attached to trees, for example, cubby / tree houses, swings etc. shall be allowed within the verge area, unless an application is made to Council and a permit is given, with applicable conditions attached.
- q. Lighting or electrical cabling must be of low voltage (for example, 12 volt) with all transformers, power supply and switching located within the adjacent property and not within the verge. Lighting must not cause a nuisance to neighbouring properties.
- r. Council staff shall maintain a list of species suitable for use in the Town of Cottesloe, which can be considered for verge treatments. This list shall be modified as species prove to be unsuitable or when new species have a proven success rate.
- s. Council staff can provide advice regarding verge developments using native and indigenous plants, particularly where reticulated lawn areas are being replaced with non- lawn, non reticulated or low water use species.

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