


STRATHFIELD COUNCIL

NATURE STRIP MAINTENANCE POLICY

6 DECEMBER 2022

	<h2>NATURE STRIP MAINTENANCE POLICY</h2>		
RESPONSIBILITY	Operations		
DATE ADOPTED	6 December 2022	MINUTE	280/22
REVISED	n/a	REVIEW	2024
CM10 No	23/18298		
ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION	<i>Local Government Act 1993</i>		

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Title and Commencement

This policy is titled *Nature Strip Maintenance Policy*. This policy was adopted by Council resolution (280/22) after public exhibition from 3 November to 30 November 2022.

1.2 Objectives of the policy

The objectives of this policy are:

- to support the appearance of well-maintained nature strips in the Strathfield LGA with the co-operation of residents
- that permission is obtained from Council for works or activities affecting the nature strip
- to set out criteria for providing assistance to residents physically and financially unable to maintain their nature strip

2.0 Policy Statement

2.1 Nature Strips in Strathfield

The Strathfield LGA is well known for its distinctive and attractive streetscapes, a historic characteristic of the Strathfield area. Well-maintained nature strips and street trees contribute to the aesthetics, character of and amenity of Strathfield LGA's streetscape.

Nature strips (or verges) are built on public land. Most nature strips contain natural turf grassed areas, often containing a street tree and/or street lighting.

Essential services such as sewerage, water pipes, power, telecommunications and gas are often located under nature strips. Utility companies may require access to the nature strip to perform

maintenance work. Utility companies are not required to repair nature strips that have been landscaped to include treatments other than natural turf.

2.2 Use of nature strips

Parking on nature strips or footpaths is not permitted as it creates a hazard for pedestrians.

Permission from Council is required to undertake any works (except mowing) on the nature strips. This includes storage of materials such as skips bins and pruning, planting or replacing trees.

Where building work is proposed, owners and/or applicants are responsible for ensuring that the street tree and grassed nature strip are protected during construction. Any damage to nature strips from building works must be rectified.

Property owners are not permitted to replace natural turf on nature strips with synthetic turf. The use of synthetic turf on nature strips cause a range of problems and maintenance issues, such as:

- reducing water infiltration, increasing water runoff into our stormwater systems, shedding of micro plastics into the stormwater system
- causing damage to street trees from a reduction in soil health, reduced water and air infiltration and damage to roots during installation
- increasing the radiant heat of the streetscape
- obstructing access to services located within the nature strip
- becoming a trip hazard and safety issue if it becomes dislodged

Council is not responsible for repairing any damage or replacing synthetic turf on the nature strip.

2.3 Maintenance of nature strips

Mowing of nature strips is generally the responsibility of the owner of the property with an adjacent boundary with the nature strip. This includes residential houses or units, schools and businesses. Council does not as a general policy itself undertake nature strip maintenance.

In special circumstances where an owner is physically and financially unable to maintain their nature strip, Council may at its discretion undertake maintenance of the nature strip for an agreed period.

Council will not maintain a nature strip where an owner has separate arrangements for maintenance of their gardens and lawns, but has excluded the nature strip from maintenance.

To be eligible for assistance, the applicant must:

- permanently reside in the Strathfield Council area and reside at the subject property
- the owner is assessed as eligible for Home Care Services through My Aged Care or have a disability or other medical condition that renders maintenance of the nature strip impractical (evidence of current care approval or medical certificate will be required)
- have no other members of the household who can assist
- are receiving a Commonwealth Pension, for example, an aged or disability pension (evidence required)

Applicants will need to meet all the above criteria and provide evidence to support their application. Applicants must reapply every 12 months and be reassessed against the criteria.

Council reserves the right to cease providing the maintenance service if an owner is no longer eligible or in breach of the conditions set out in this policy.

3.0 Version Control

Date	Type	Minute
6 December 2022	Adopt policy, following public exhibition	280/22