

This information sheet provides general information regarding landscape works and other works that are undertaken in road reserve areas by those other than Council.

THE PURPOSE OF PUBLIC ROAD RESERVE AREAS

Public road reserve areas have a multifunctional role as part of the local streetscape. Public road reserve areas are an area of land that extends from one property boundary across a road corridor to another property boundary. These public road reserve areas are allocated primarily to provide safe and functional road corridors for pedestrians/cyclists and vehicles.

Public road reserves areas consist of:

- **a road verge** - an area of land between the kerb/edge of the road and the private property boundary. The road verge area is used for a variety of functions including providing a safe route for pedestrians/cyclists, a buffer to private property from the road, a space to provide appropriate streetscaping and a corridor to which underground and above ground infrastructure can be located eg. water, electricity, telephone and sewer lines.
- **the road** - provides for safe and appropriate passage for vehicles/cyclists
- **roundabouts and traffic median strips** - located in some public road reserve areas, they assist in traffic management and provide in some cases pedestrian refuges and places for landscaping.

WHAT IS 'PRIVATE LANDSCAPE WORKS IN PUBLIC ROAD VERGE AREAS' ?

Often private residents and /or private developers are keen to improve the amenity of their particular property or local streetscape by planting/ undertaking other works in public road verge areas. This may be simply wishing to plant a street tree or to undertake complex planting and construction of garden beds. Whilst this practice in some cases may improve the amenity of the local neighbourhood it may also create problems for Council in managing the use of the public road reserve appropriately eg. it can cause difficulties in accessing underground and above ground infrastructure, impact on traffic visibility and traffic management and contribute to unsafe pedestrian access. In cases where this occurs Council may have to remove privately funded landscape works that have been constructed in the public road verge area. This adds to the costs for Council in managing road reserve areas appropriately, and can lead to conflict between Council and the adjoining property owner. Council is keen for local residents to contribute to the amenity of their local neighbourhood through the use of simple landscaping and maintenance of public road reserve areas, but only where such is appropriate to the day to day management and maintenance of these corridors.

The following explains broadly some of the issues related to private landscaping in road reserve areas.

SOME ISSUES RELATED TO PRIVATE LANDSCAPING IN ROAD RESERVE AREAS

- **Planting inappropriate species in the wrong locations in the road verge area and median strip can:**
- Change the look of the character of the street and/or the local neighbourhood eg. if several dominant forms of palm species are used in front of a residence when all the other street trees in the area are canopy shade trees with a leafy character.
 - Some species have invasive root systems that may have a significant impact on infrastructure eg. some roots may uproot underground and above ground infrastructure which may lead to costly repairs and inconvenience to adjoining property owners.
 - Plants that are planted in locations and configurations that block visibility and provide possible hiding places for intruders eg. sometimes shrubs are used to provide a screen. When put in the wrong location and at the wrong height views of the street and views from the street may become blocked and cause potential safety problems for vehicles pedestrians and cyclists.
 - Location of landscaping may give the perception that public land is private eg. landscaped garden beds may block access by cutting across a footpath area thus forcing people onto the road corridor and potential danger.

➤ **Irrigation**

Council is endeavouring to promote the use of landscaping that does not require the use of valuable potable water from the City's water reticulation system. Often the use of certain types of species or designs of landscaping requires constant irrigation to ensure the longevity of that planting design. Road reserve areas are a harsh environment for plants to survive. It is important that whatever plants are located in the road reserve area that these do not require permanent irrigation. Irrigation systems can also pose a safety hazard for pedestrians eg. sprinkler heads can be a potential trip hazard to pedestrians and spraying patterns for irrigation can provide unsafe and slippery surfaces for pedestrians and cyclists.

➤ **Extensive pavement and concreting of nature strip**

All properties usually require a driveway access from the road

into the property. In some cases especially in development with small frontages this can eventually result in a streetscape of concrete or paving consequently negatively impacting on the character of the local neighbourhood – streetscape of concrete. Additionally extensive hard surfacing of the road verge area can obstruct access and or result in costly removal and replacement when access to underground infrastructure is required for repair or maintenance.

➤ **Public Liability**

Issues of public liability can arise if accidents occur through inappropriate planting or placing of private infrastructure.

The following publications give guidance on the 'do's' and 'don'ts' for landscape works in road reserve areas:

CURRENT COUNCIL POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

- **Landscape Works**
Landscape Strategy Part 1 – Landscape Character: Guiding the Image of the City;
Landscape Strategy Part 2 – Landscape Works Documentation Manual - Section; C,7.0 - Road Reserves
Landscape Strategy Part 3 - Information Sheets.
Local Law No. 11; (Part 3)
Council Standard Drawing for Road Verges No. 59205
- **Vehicle Crossovers**
Land Development Guidelines Standard Drawing No 59217, 59218;
Permit Requirements – Local Law No. 11; (Part 3)
- **Tree Removal on Council Managed Lands**
Policy for Tree Removal on Council Controlled Lands.

WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU WANT TO UNDERTAKE LANDSCAPE WORKS IN PUBLIC ROAD RESERVE AREAS ?

(NOTE: ANY LANDSCAPING OR OTHER WORKS UNDERTAKEN IN THE ROAD RESERVE BY THOSE OTHER THAN COUNCIL, REQUIRES PRIOR WRITTEN APPROVAL FROM COUNCIL)

<p>If a resident wishes to undertake landscaping in the road verge adjacent to their residence for amenity reasons such as is to be approved by Council and the following should be noted:</p>	<p>If a private developer wishes to undertake landscape works in road reserve areas as part of the development of a site adjacent, approval is to be obtained via the Development Approval Process. The following should be noted with respect to particular development applications:</p>
<p><i>Elements that Council does not consider appropriate in the road verge area:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any type of garden beds and associated hard garden edging • Irrigation • Inappropriate species in the wrong locations • Extensive areas of pavement • Private structures such as signage, decorative walls and garden features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCU/ROL – the applicant is to identify in broad terms what is proposed in the road reserve areas as part of the application for development permit. This is usually indicated on the Statement of Landscape Intent that may be required by the Council as part of the Request for Information phase or where required by the Planning Scheme. • Operational Works – Landscape – the applicant is to provide the detailed landscape works information related to all road reserve areas and other public land on any Detailed Landscape Plan that is required by Council as part of an Operational Works Approval. • Entry Statements -All proposed Entry Statements to private development follow the above process and are to comply with Council's Entry Statement Policy.