



Development and Planting within Road Reserve

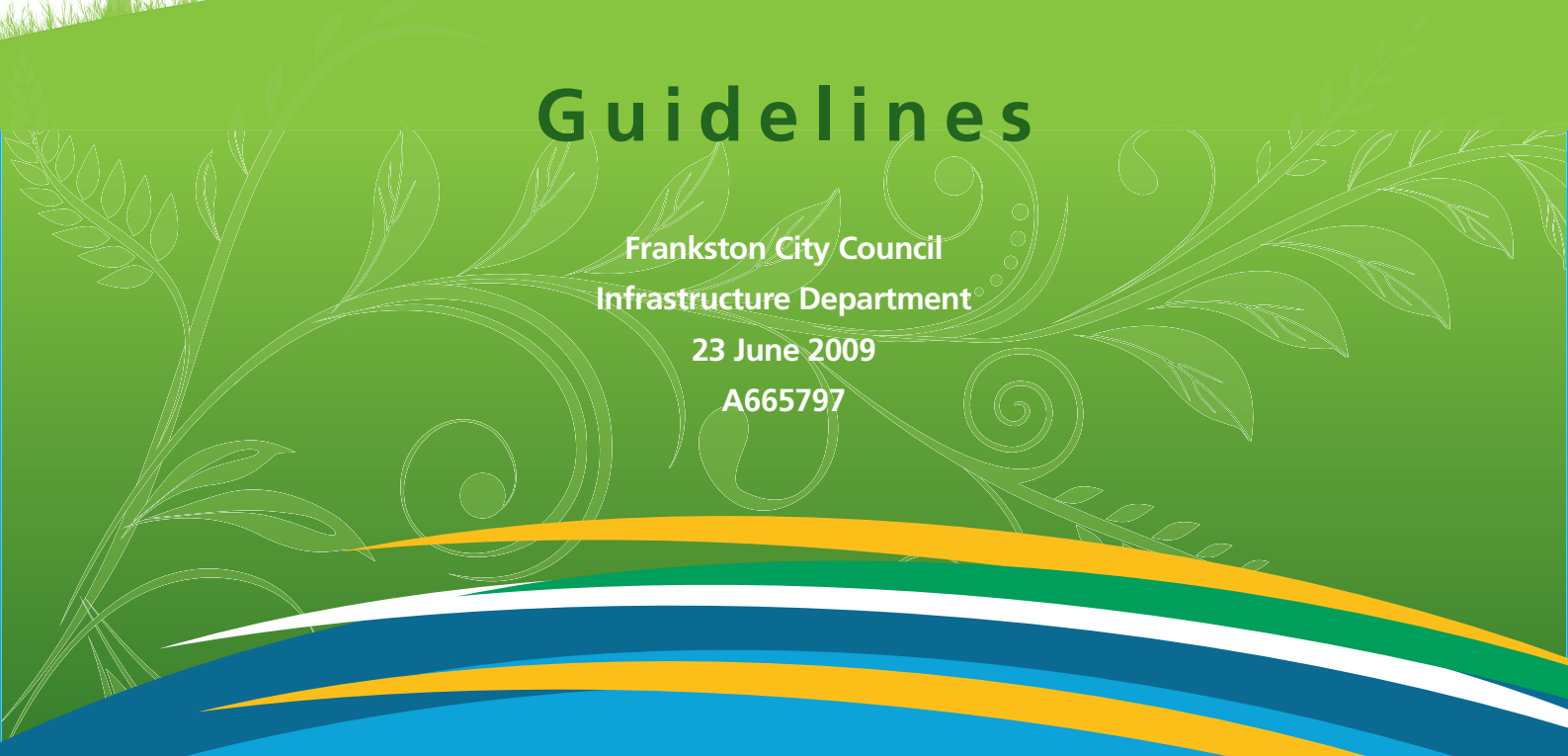


Guidelines

Frankston City Council
Infrastructure Department

23 June 2009

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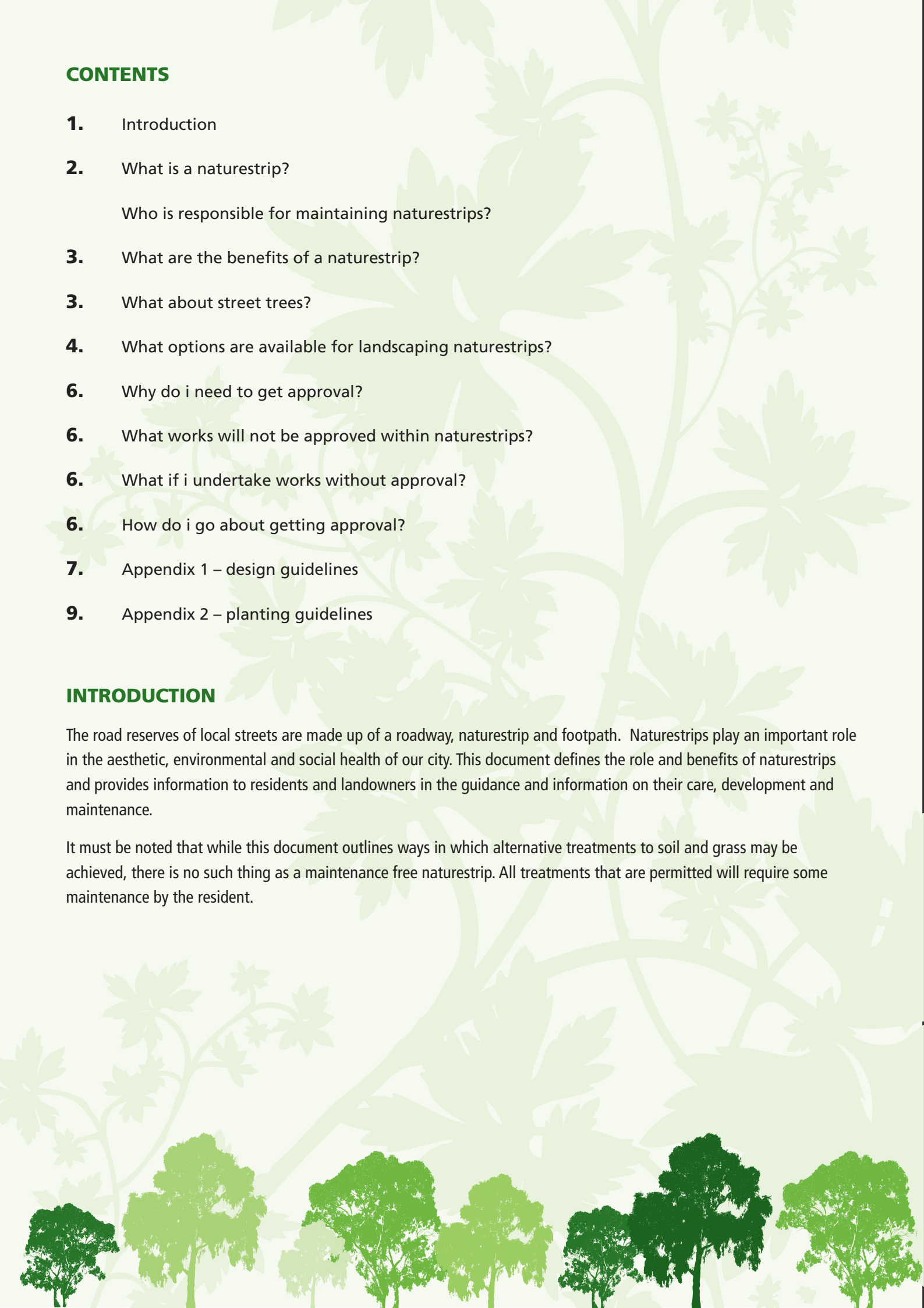
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INTRODUCTION

The road reserves of local streets are made up of a roadway, naturestrip and footpath. Naturestrips play an important role in the aesthetic, environmental and social health of our city. This document defines the role and benefits of naturestrips and provides information to residents and landowners in the guidance and information on their care, development and maintenance.

It must be noted that while this document outlines ways in which alternative treatments to soil and grass may be achieved, there is no such thing as a maintenance free naturestrip. All treatments that are permitted will require some maintenance by the resident.





WHAT IS A NATURESTRIP?

The term naturestrip refers to the area of road reserve between the property boundary and the road kerb or shoulder in roads and streets. This includes the strips of public land on the sides of corner properties.

This land is set aside for a variety of uses including the provision of essential services such as telephone, gas, water, sewerage and electricity supply (sometimes above ground on poles, sometimes underground), public lighting and public transport (bus stops and shelters).

Naturestrips also provide safe direct access for service personnel such as postal staff and service maintenance staff, as well as providing a flat and stable location for the placement of refuse and recycling bins and clearance for entry and exit from motor vehicles for passengers, prams or wheelchairs.

Naturestrips provide an open space that allows clear viewing lines for pedestrians, vehicle traffic and cyclists at intersections, driveways and curves.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING NATURESTRIPS?

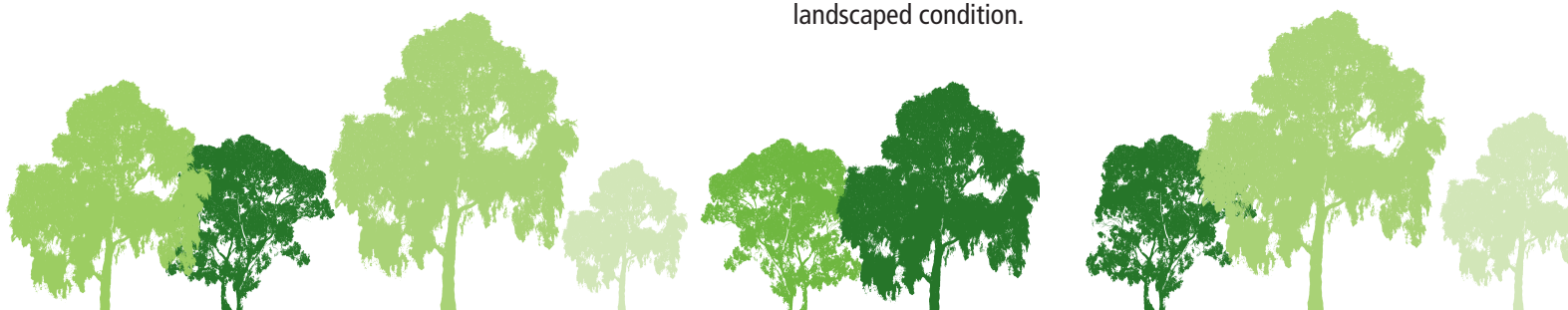
It is the responsibility of the resident to maintain the naturestrip abutting their property. Normally this is by regular mowing, weeding and picking up litter.

Council relies on the established community expectation that residents will maintain the naturestrip in order to present a neat and tidy street frontage. Council does not carry out renovation or maintenance (including mowing and watering) of naturestrips.

Where residents do not maintain naturestrips in a responsible way and naturestrips become unsightly, the resident will be made aware of his/her responsibility that the naturestrip is to be maintained to a satisfactory standard.

All works, other than the above mentioned maintenance, in the roadway, naturestrip or footpath requires the approval of Council. If the naturestrip becomes damaged during service authority works, or as a result of building work on the abutting property, the relevant contractor or builder is responsible for naturestrip repairs and reinstatement.

Where Service Authorities or Contractors are required to undertake works that require the removal or disruption of objects, plants or other things on road reserves and footpaths that have been installed by the residents, the Service Authority or Contractors will only be required to reinstate the road reserve or footpath to normal condition ie: not the landscaped condition.





WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A NATURESTRIP?

Naturestrips provide the opportunity for the development of good streetscape character and for the growth of street trees. They compliment the natural settings of the neighbourhood and provide a valuable habitat for fauna whilst visually softening the effect of the harder surfaces of road, footpath and driveway paving, fences and buildings.

An open, unpaved area of land allows for the penetration of rainwater and air into the soil, improving soil health, promoting healthy growth of street and garden trees and to allow water to enter the water table. Unpaved naturestrips reduce the amount of stormwater runoff experienced during rainfall events and reduces the amount of pollution transported by stormwater into waterways.

WHAT ABOUT STREET TREES?

Street trees are provided by Council as set out in Council's Street Tree Master Plan. As a guide, one tree per frontage and up to two trees per sideage (corner blocks) are planted in residential naturestrips. These are selected from species approved by Council. Street trees are generally planted in the centre of the naturestrip with due regard for the maintenance of services and sight clearance lines for traffic with an offset no less than 1m from the back of kerb. Council is responsible for and carries out pruning and clearance of street trees in accordance with relevant maintenance specifications or management plans, and may plant street trees where none exist even if a permit is granted for a landscape that does not include a tree.

To request a street tree, please contact Council's Customer Relations Unit on 1300 322 322.





WHAT OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE FOR LANDSCAPING NATURESTRIPS?

Traditionally, mown grass naturestrips are the most common form of naturestrip treatment in the City. They offer the resident a low maintenance cost form of naturestrip and are compatible with the other uses of the land.

The use of water to irrigate lawns in the City has been severely impacted by water restrictions and it is more obvious in the summer months that the restrictions have a visual impact on the streetscape.

Council supports beautification of naturestrips provided that the underlying purposes of the naturestrip can be maintained whilst ensuring the ongoing safety of the general public.

When a resident wishes to make changes to the standard grassed naturestrip, the cost of these changes and the ongoing maintenance is to be borne by the resident. Three options or a combination of the three options are suggested:

Option 1 – Warm Season Grasses

The use of new drought tolerant grasses will help to ensure that the naturestrip will remain in better horticultural health throughout the year, than other grass species. Seasonal variation may mean the grass dies back and browns off at certain times dependent on the species, but in general the naturestrip will remain low maintenance and good looking year round.

Suggested Warm Season grass species

- Fescue • Ryegrass • Couch

Option 2 – Approved Plantings

An alternative to grass is a planted and mulched naturestrip. This provides a soft and visually pleasing alternative (when well maintained). This treatment involves the use of the naturestrip area as a garden bed with the area being mulched with organic mulch and planted with low growing native plants.

This is usually done in the belief that it is low in water use and low in maintenance. Plants should be hardy,

low growing, low maintenance and have low water requirements. The treatment of the naturestrip in this manner must still allow for the safe passage of pedestrians.

As the garden bed is a non-trafficable surface, it prohibits the passage of pedestrian traffic; so non-planted buffer zones must be maintained in line with the Design Guidelines found in Appendix 1.

The basic guidelines are as follows;

- A minimum footpath width of 1.5m is to be retained and kept clear at all times, which may be incorporated in and form part of the minimum buffer zone of 1.0m from the back of kerb if the existing naturestrip width does not support both clear zones;
- Approved planting are to be maintained below a height of 300mm from outside edge to a maximum of 600mm at centre of planting area – refer to Appendix 2 Approved Planting list;
- Hard landscaping elements such as rock, timber, retaining walls, ornaments must not be used;
- Approved mulch material must be kept stable and properly contained. Larger materials such as stone or crushed rock greater than 10mm or chunky woodchips are not permitted;

While it is generally assumed that this type of treatment is cheap to install and easy to maintain when compared with the other alternatives, in reality the opposite is true. This is the most expensive option to install, and is the alternative that has the highest maintenance requirements over the long term.

In addition, this treatment typically lasts only 5 – 10 years before significant re-work is required to keep the benefit of the treatment and prevent the naturestrip becoming unsightly or weed infested.

Ongoing maintenance, (as with lawn mowing) is required to be undertaken by the resident. In 5 – 10 years, most of the organic mulch will have broken down through natural processes and need replacement at the cost of the resident. In summary, the initial cost can be expected to be required again within 10 years should this alternative be chosen.

Option 3 - Permeable Surface

ie. Granitic Sand or Similar

A further alternative to grass naturestrips is a permeable surface treatment such as granitic sand or similar graded material. While this treatment does not require watering or mowing, it will require periodic weeding and maintenance.

As noted earlier there is no such thing as a maintenance free naturestrip. Being an inorganic material, this naturestrip treatment option is low maintenance but comes at a higher upfront cost and maybe disagreeable in appearance to some residents. The glare in the summer sun and the reflection generated by this treatment should be taken into account when considering this option.

The laying of a material such as this requires more material, labour and skill than a grass treatment. The area will need to be excavated to approximately 100mm below top of kerb and particular care must be taken not to disturb the roots of existing street trees (hand excavation will be required at the base of street trees). The excavated area is then filled with a 50mm layer of recycled crushed brick or crushed rock no greater than

20mm in particle size. This base layer must be compacted using a 'wacker plate' or other form of compaction such as a water filled roller. This will provide a firm base for the top layer.

A final 50mm layer of granitic sand or similar approved graded material no greater than 10mm maximum particle size is then placed and compacted (avoiding the root zone of existing street tree) into a level surface, gently graded to the kerb to allow for drainage purposes. Please note granetic sand is suitable on near level surfaces, and is not appropriate if there is any slope as it is prone to erosion and run off potentially into drains or onto footpaths creating a hazard.

The approval of this option (Option 3 - permeable surface) is in no way to be regarded as approval to utilise the road reserve (naturestrip) for the parking of any type of vehicle (parking offences will be enforced by Council officers).

Design Guidelines for this treatment can be found in Appendix 1.

If you plan to do anything other than grow grass (Option 1), you will need a permit from Council.



Example of Approved Option 3

WHY DO I NEED TO GET APPROVAL?

Council is very much aware of the need to provide a safe environment within urban and rural areas within the municipality. As the naturestrip is public land, the Council must be vigilant when it comes to recognising when a threat to public safety exists and who has carried out the work.

HOW DO I GO ABOUT GETTING APPROVAL?

Work is not to commence on any alterations to the naturestrip without written consent from Council.

An application for Consent - Development and Planting within Road Reserve must be made detailing the following;

- Property owner details
- Property address
- Proposed landscaping
- Sketch outlining proposal (refer to Appendix 1 – Design Guidelines)
- List of plants to be used (refer to Appendix 2 – Approval Plantings List)
- Prescribed application fee

This application is to be addressed to:

Infrastructure Department
Frankston City Council
PO Box 490
FRANKSTON VIC 3199

Prior to commencing any work in the road reserve a "Works within the Road Reserve Permit" must be obtained from Council as per the requirements of the Road Management Act 2004.

Once an approval is obtained residents are advised to call "Dial Before You Dig" on phone number 1100 to determine the location of underground services within the naturestrip area.

WHAT WORKS WILL NOT BE APPROVED WITHIN NATURESTRIPS?

Irrigation systems will not be permitted in naturestrips and neither will rocks, bluestone pitchers, retaining walls, edgings, water features, letterboxes or other objects deemed to be an obstruction or potential hazard.

Only approved planting listed in Appendix 2 are to be used. Council will not consider other plantings or surface materials.

WHAT IF I UNDERTAKE WORKS WITHOUT APPROVAL?

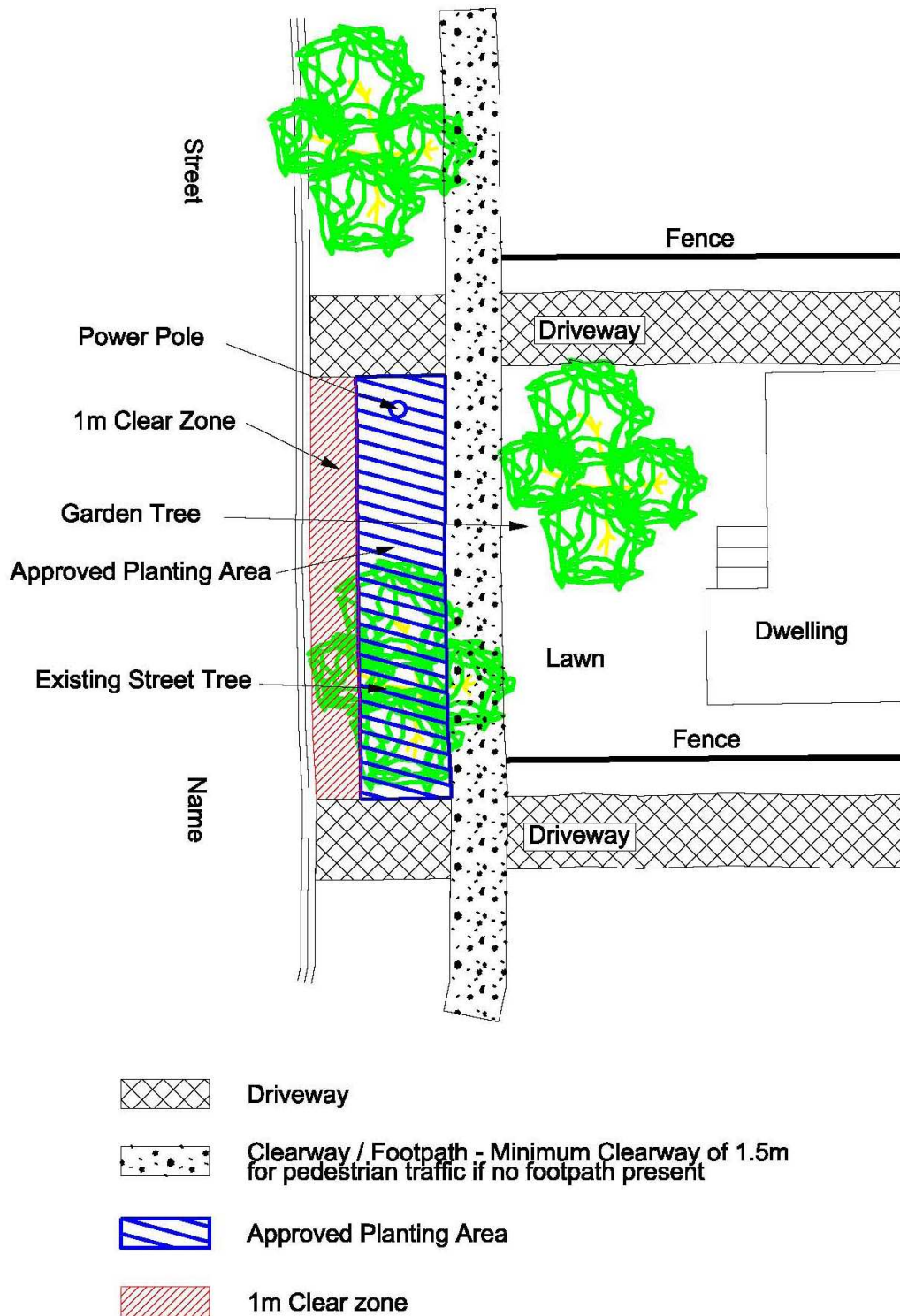
Council will take appropriate action to rectify problems in relation to tripping hazards or safety issues and all non-compliant landscaping found within naturestrips. Property owners will be notified in writing requesting that they attend to the identified problem.

If the property owner fails to take action within a reasonable time of being notified, a "Notice of Non-Compliance" will be issued requesting that the specific problem be fixed by a specified date (a 28 day notice is usually given).

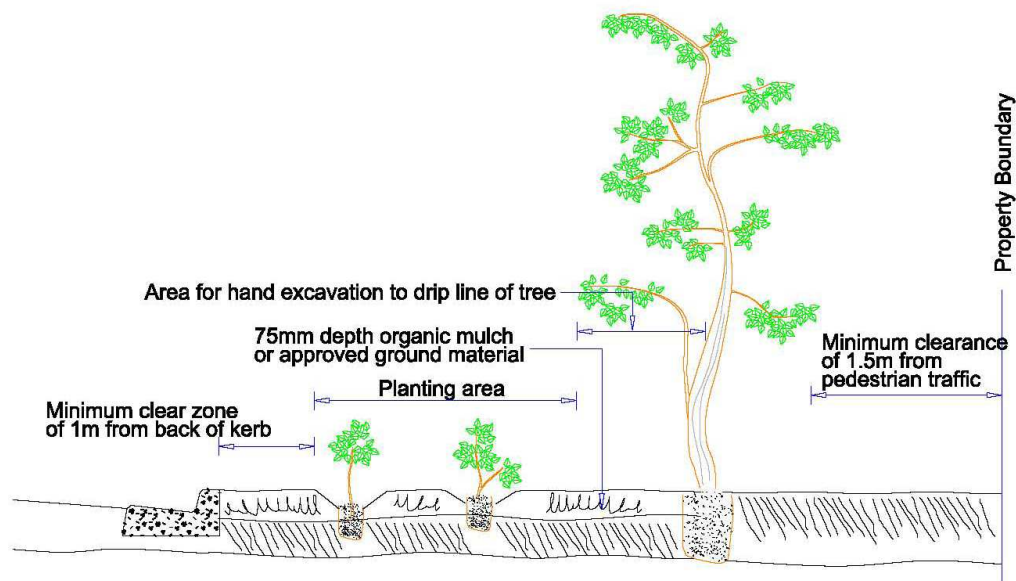
Failure to take action following a "Notice of Non-Compliance" can result in an "Infringement Notice" (up to 10 penalty units or \$1000) being issued under the provisions of the Road Management Act 2004 and the required works being undertaken by Council at the property owner's cost.



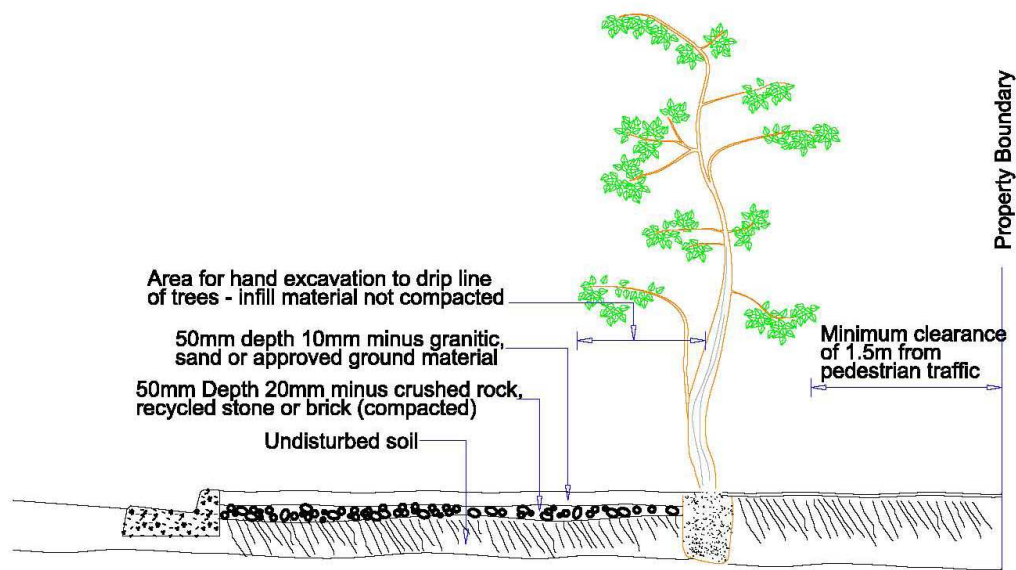
Appendix 1 - Design Guidelines



Appendix 1 - Design Guidelines



Installation details for alternative option 2



Installation details for alternative option 3

Appendix 2 – Planting Guidelines

Approved plantings listed must be maintained below a height of 300mm. Alternative species may be considered by Council.

GRASSES

Common Name	Botanical Name
Weeping Grass	<i>Microleana stipoides</i>
Wallaby Grass	<i>Austrodanthonia</i> species
Common Tussock Grass	<i>Poa labillardieri</i>
Coastal Tussock Grass	<i>Poa poiformis</i>
Coast/Prickly Spear Grass	<i>Austrostipa stipoides</i>
Sword Sedge	<i>Lepidosperma concavum</i>
Kangaroo Grass	<i>Themeda triandra</i>

LOW GROWING GROUND COVERS

Noon Flower	<i>Carpotrotus rossii</i>
Running Postman	<i>Kennedia prostrata</i>
Bower Spinach	<i>Tetragona implexicoma</i>
Kidney Weed	<i>Dichondra repens</i>
Rounded Noon Flower	<i>Disphyma crassifolium</i>
Common Everlasting	<i>Chrysociphalum apiculatum</i>
Button Everlasting	<i>Helichrysum scorpioides</i>

Gazania species and Creeping Boobialla *Myoporum Parvifolium* (Not indigenous but worthy plants as they are very hardy)

TALLER CLUMPING TUSSOCKS & UNDER DRIP LINE OF EXISTING TREES

Spiny Matt Rush	<i>Lomandra longifolia</i>
Black Anther Lily	<i>Dianella revoluta</i>
Knobby Club Rush	<i>Ficinia nodosa</i>
Austral Storks Bill	<i>Pelargonium australe</i>

Please check with your local nursery or the Frankston Indigenous Nursery on the availability of plant species.

FRANKSTON INDIGENOUS NURSERY

McCulloch Avenue Seaford (Next to SES Depot)

Melways Ref 99F8

Phone: (03) 9768 1513

Opening Hours

1st Saturday of each Month 9:00am to 1:00pm

Every Wednesday 9:00am to 3:00pm

or by appointment weekdays

