

COUNCIL POLICY

Synthetic Turf on Nature Strips Policy	TRIM folder:	
	Approval date:	December 2009
	Approved by:	Council
	Review Date	June 2010
Responsible Officer:	Expiry Date	July 2010
Manager Parks and Open Space	Version No	1
Authorising Officer:	Chief Executive Officer	

1. PURPOSE

This policy outlines the council's position on the installation of synthetic turf on nature strips.

2. BACKGROUND

There has been a decline in the condition of grassed nature strips and medians due to the sustained drought conditions and compaction. Water restrictions, competition for water from trees and soil compactions from vehicles and pedestrians have all contributed to a decline in the condition of nature strips.

Synthetic surfaces (artificial turf) are increasingly being installed in nature strips by businesses and individuals in the City of Port Phillip and there are a growing number of requests to council from the community to install synthetic surface.

Council currently does not have a policy or guidelines for nature strips.

A nature strip policy is currently being developed and is due for completion in June 2010. Community consultation on the development of this policy will occur over the period October 2009 – March 2010.

In the interim, whilst this policy is in development the council has developed a policy position on the installation of synthetic turf on nature strips.

3. CONTEXT

A nature strip is the area of council land spanning the boundary of private property to the street kerb. Nature strips are the location for services such as telephone, gas, water and power.

Nature strips provide an open space that allows open view lines for vehicle traffic and cyclists at intersections and curves, provide space for the opening of car doors and provide a location for rubbish bins for collection.

Nature strips are public land and council has a responsibility to ensure that nature strips provide a safe environment. Community amenity Local Law No. 3 has provisions that work to protect council assets and prevent unapproved use of council assets

Council relies on residents to maintain their nature strip.

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to all nature strips within the City of Port Phillip.

5. REFERENCES

- Port Phillip City Council Community Amenity Local Law No. 3

6. DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 A nature strip is the area of council land spanning the boundary of private property to the street kerb.

7. COUNCIL POLICY

- 6.1. Synthetic turf cannot be installed on nature strips within the City of Port Phillip.
- 6.2 If synthetic turf is installed the resident may be required to reinstate the nature strip to an approved surface. The owner would be responsible for the cost of reinstatement.

8. ATTACHMENTS

- Summary of the benefits and disbenefits of synthetic turf on nature strip

Synthetic Turf in Nature Strips

Summary of the key benefits and disbenefits of synthetic turf on nature strips:

BENEFITS	DISBENEFITS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When it is first laid it looks very neat.• No need for watering or weeding.• No need for mowing.• Permeable.• Aesthetics: visually a soft scape rather than a hard scape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustainability – Synthetic turf has high embedded energy during the production process. It reduces soil permeability and health.• Disposal – Synthetic turf does not break-down. It requires land-fill disposal at the end of its useful life.• Cost – Initial supply and installation costs are significantly higher than standard materials such as natural grass, granitic gravel and asphalt. Repair or replacement costs are also medium to high.• Maintenance – Nature strips and medians are frequently disturbed by service authorities, or damaged by vehicles and deliveries. Repairs or replacement are expected to be frequent, costly and unsightly.• Character - Synthetic turf changes the look and feel of streets in which it is laid, with potential impacts on neighbourhood character.• Reduced Biota – Synthetic turf do not support insect or other biological processes.• Synthetic turf retains heat and contributes to heat island effect.