

2.16 LANDSCAPING AND WATER SENSITIVE URBAN DESIGN

(ADOPTED 1999)

1. INTRODUCTION

Landscaping is an essential element of good urban design with the potential to enhance the built form, by complementing architectural design and providing a buffer to reduce visual conflict resulting from uncoordinated development of individual sites. Suitable species of trees in the urban environment can provide shade for pedestrians and cars, reduce ambient temperatures and contributing to the overall amenity and character of our urban areas.

Appropriately located and managed landscaping also has the potential to be integrated into a strategy for urban stormwater management, which is critical to the protection of our natural environment. This is particularly important because of the limited rainfall, the importance of underground water resources and the extreme temperatures experienced during summer months. Trees and shrubs provide an essential habitat for birds, which add to the character and amenity of our urban environments. At the same time, landscaped areas can contribute towards the recharge of underground water systems, improve the quality of stormwater runoff and reduce peak stormwater flows for the benefit of our surface water systems.

While most residents take pride in the landscaping of their properties, and recognise landscaping as important to both the value and amenity of their dwellings, this is not always the case with commercial and industrial development, where landscaped areas are sometimes seen as a waste of valuable land and a costly nuisance to maintain. However, with greater community concern for the environment, more and more commercial businesses are now recognising the importance of landscaping, for the image of their businesses and the amenity of the environment.

2. AIM

The aim of this policy is to promote the more effective use of landscaping as a means of enhancing the character and amenity of the urban area and the more sustainable management of ground and surface water resources.

3. POLICY

- 3.1** Unless buildings are constructed up to the street alignment, all new commercial and industrial development is to be provided with a landscape strip adjacent to the road frontage (excluding any crossover areas) of at least 2 metres in width, such area to be used for the planting of trees and shrubs to enhance the visual amenity of the building as viewed from the street.
- 3.2** All required car parking areas shall be landscaped by the planting of shade trees along car parking rows, with a minimum spacing of 10 metres unless otherwise approved by the Council where such a spacing can be demonstrated to be impractical in the circumstances of the particular development.
- 3.3** Unless it can be demonstrated to be impractical in the particular circumstances, all open air hard standing areas shall be drained into a landscape area so as to maximise stormwater recharge and minimise the export of water borne pollutants to the surface water system. Where there is inadequate recharge capacity for design rates of runoff, drainage outlets and/or compensation areas should be provided to accommodate any overflow, but should not be such as to intercept normal runoff from low intensity storm events.
- 3.4** In the case of residential development involving two or more new dwellings, any driveway or open air car parking areas shall be provided with a perimeter landscape strip a minimum of one metre in width.

3.5 For the purposes of open space calculation under the Residential Planning Codes, where a specific area of the site is required to be set aside for such purposes:

- Any area of planting to be included in open space calculations, shall not be less than one metre in width; and
- No portion of a landscaped area can be included in the calculation of a car bay area.

3.6 In the case of all new commercial development or residential development involving three or more dwellings, the application shall be accompanied by a landscape plan showing the areas proposed to be landscaped and the particular planting proposed in relation to any communal open space, common driveway, customer, communal or visitor parking areas and any screening required.

Where a landscape plan has been prepared and approved as part of a planning application, any subsequent development in accordance with the Council's approval shall be subject to implementation of the landscape plan including the establishment of a suitable watering system and a program for on-going maintenance.