	Function: TOWN PLANNING	Adopted: 5 TH May 2010
	Policy Number: DEV003	Resolution No.: C209:10
	Version Number: 1	Last Review: 5 th April 2017
	Frequency of Review: As required	Resolution No.: C74:0417
		Next Review: As required

LANDSCAPING POLICY

Policy Statement

In accordance with Council's Development Plan Council may require the implementation of landscaping (where development requiring development approval), supported by a Landscaping Plan to show details of hard and soft landscaping and position of fences and walls. Compliance with the provisions of this Policy ensures compliance with Council's Development Plan.

1. Introduction

In terms of the requirements of the Development Plan Council may require landscaping as a condition of approval with the intent to enhance the amenity of the development and the area in which the development is located. The purpose of the Landscaping Policy is to provide guidance to Council Officers and proponents of development involving landscaping works on the following matters:

- Details of landscaping required.
- Details required being included on a Landscaping Plan.

2. Applicable Legislation

Development Act 1993

3. Integration with Corporate Objectives

Environmental Objective Sustainability

- a) To responsibly manage the natural and built environment to ensure its sustainability and diversity to the community

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4. Definitions

Development has the same meaning as defined in the Development Act 1993 and for the purposes of this policy also includes *building work* as defined in the Development Act 1993.

Development approval means an approval issued by Council or any other relevant authority to carry out development as defined in this policy.

Fence means any fence, whether setback from an allotment boundary or a fence dividing contiguous land of adjoining owners or a fence facing a street boundary.

Landscaping includes all hard and soft landscaping.

Major Road means any major thoroughfare, main access road into a town or any road where the legal maximum speed limit exceeds 50km/h.

Wall means any retaining wall or other walls not part of the main structure of a building.

5. Application

The application of this Policy is set out under the following headings:

- Basis on which Policy is enforced
- Development requiring landscaping and a landscaping plan
- Details required on a landscaping plan
- Street trees
- Preferred species
- General requirements for implementation of landscaping, fences and walls
- Specific requirements for implementation of landscaping, fences and walls for particular uses
 - *Commercial, retail and office uses*
 - *Industrial uses*
 - *Main entrances into towns*
 - *Recreational areas*
 - *Residential Parks and Caravan and Tourist Parks*
 - *Residential uses (all types)*
 - *Telecommunication facilities*
 - *Vehicle parking areas*
 - *Warehouses and buildings and structures designed for bulk handling*

Basis on which Policy is enforced

This Policy is in accordance with Council's Development Plan to improve the appearance of land and buildings and to improve the amenity of the area in which the development is located.

Development requiring landscaping and a landscaping plan

Any new development requiring development approval may require landscaping as required by Council's Development Plan. Where development involves landscaping works, Council may require a Landscaping Plan prepared by a suitably qualified person.

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Details required on a landscaping plan

Subject to the complexity of the proposed development details provided in the Landscaping Plan should include:

- (a) location and species of existing trees;
- (b) location and species of trees and shrubs proposed to be planted;
- (c) location and details of proposed garden beds, shrubberies, ornamental structures etc;
- (d) treatment of lawned areas, whether to be turfed or seeded;
- (e) details of watering facilities and/or irrigation systems to be provided;
- (f) materials and construction details of any fences, pergolas, driveways or other structures;
- (g) surface or sub-surface drainage details to landscape works;
- (h) the relationship between the proposed landscaping and the existing or proposed building(s) on the site, and any existing buildings on adjoining sites;
- (i) the shadows cast by proposed plantings on adjoining sites;
- (j) type, position and height of fencing; and
- (k) position and height of retaining walls.

Street trees

The Landscaping Plan should include any street tree planting proposed or required as part of a development approval. Street tree plantings must comply with the District Council of the Copper Coast "*Street Tree Policy*".

Where street tree planting is proposed or required as part of a development approval, the Landscaping Plan should provide the following details:

- (a) the position of underground services and the potential need for digging to repair or maintain those services;
- (b) the position of above ground services and the need not to obstruct them;
- (c) the width of the verge;
- (d) the future level of maintenance;
- (e) the location and width of driveways; and
- (f) the need to ensure trees and shrubs will not obscure lighting or design sight distances from vehicles.

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Preferred species

The tree and shrub should be of an appropriate species listed in the “Recommended Landscape Plant List” attached to this Policy as Attachment 1 and specifically prepared for footpath planting as follows:

- (a) Lower branches should be progressively removed to facilitate desirable growth ie. with a clean trunk;
- (b) Plants should be grown on to a minimum container size 250mm pot/10 litre bag;

In general, the following types of trees and shrubs are not preferred;

- (a) Trees and shrubs which have roots which are likely to damage pavement or kerb and channel;
- (b) Trees and shrubs which require constant lopping to overcome obstructions to pedestrians and vehicular traffic;
- (c) Trees and shrubs which deposit excessive foliage or potentially dangerous seed pods;
- (d) Trees and shrubs which are subject to constant disease or insect attack;
- (e) Species with a potential to become environmental weeds, and
- (f) Species with prickles, thorns or irritant hairs.

[Note: The “Recommended Landscape Plant List” is updated from time to time and not necessarily referred back to Council for adoption. Major changes will be referred to Council for endorsement]

General requirements for implementation of landscaping, fences and walls

- (a) Landscaping, fencing and construction of walls should be implemented on the land that is the subject of the development unless otherwise stipulated or approved by Council.
- (b) Development should incorporate landscaping and minimise hard paved surfaces in order to:
 - (i) complement built form and reduce the visual impact of larger buildings (eg taller and broader plantings against taller and bulkier building components);
 - (ii) enhance the appearance of road frontages;
 - (iii) screen service yards, loading areas and outdoor storage areas;
 - (iv) minimise maintenance and watering requirements;
 - (v) enhance and define outdoor spaces, including car parking areas;
 - (vi) maximise shade and shelter;
 - (vii) assist in climate control within and around buildings;
 - (viii) minimise heat absorption and reflection;
 - (ix) maintain privacy;
 - (x) maximise stormwater re-use;
 - (xi) complement existing vegetation, including native vegetation;
 - (xii) contribute to the viability of ecosystems and species; and

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- (xiii) promote water and biodiversity conservation.
- (c) Landscaping should:
 - (i) be oriented towards the street frontage;
 - (ii) result in the appropriate clearance from powerlines and other infrastructure being maintained.
- (d) Landscaping should not:
 - (i) unreasonably restrict solar access to adjoining development;
 - (ii) cause damage to buildings, paths and other landscaping from root invasion, soil disturbance or plant overcrowding.
 - (iii) introduce pest plants;
 - (iv) increase the risk of bushfire;
 - (v) remove opportunities for passive surveillance;
 - (vi) increase the risk of weed invasion;
 - (vii) obscure driver sight lines;
 - (viii) create a hazard for train or tram drivers by obscuring sight lines at crossovers.
- (e) Landscaping associated with open space and recreation areas should:
 - (i) not compromise the drainage function of any drainage channel;
 - (ii) provide shade and windbreaks along cyclist and pedestrian routes, around picnic and barbecue areas and seating, and in car parking areas;
 - (iii) maximise opportunities for informal surveillance throughout the park;
 - (iv) enhance the visual amenity of the area and complement existing buildings;
 - (v) be designed and selected to minimise maintenance costs;
 - (vi) provide habitat for local fauna.
- (g) Fences and walls, including retaining walls, should:
 - (i) not result in damage to neighbouring trees;
 - (ii) be compatible with the associated development and with existing predominant, attractive fences and walls in the locality;
 - (iii) enable some visibility of buildings from and to the street to enhance safety and allow casual surveillance;
 - (iv) incorporate articulation or other detailing where there is a large expanse of wall facing the street;
 - (v) assist in highlighting building entrances;
 - (vi) be sited and limited in height, to ensure adequate sight lines for motorists and pedestrians especially on corner sites;
 - (vii) in the case of side and rear boundaries, be of sufficient height to maintain privacy and/or security without adversely affecting the visual amenity or access to sunlight of adjoining land;
 - (viii) be constructed of non-flammable materials.
 - (ix) where appropriate, provide effective screening from adjoining sensitive areas or other incompatible use; and

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- (iv) constructed so that it assists in highlighting entrances and paths.
- (h) Front fencing should be open in form to allow cross ventilation and access to sunlight.
- (j) Fencing (including colour-coated wire mesh fencing) adjacent to a *Major Road* should be set back in one of the following ways:
 - (i) in line with the building facade;
 - (ii) behind the building line;
 - (iii) behind a landscaped area that softens its visual impact.
- (i) Fencing (including colour-coated wire mesh fencing) adjacent to public roads that is not a *Major Road* should be set back in one of the following ways:
 - (i) in line with the building facade;
 - (ii) behind the building line;
 - (iii) behind a landscaped area that softens its visual impact unless the fencing is of an open style “see-through” type fencing.

Specific requirements for implementation of landscaping, fences and walls for particular uses

The following criteria shall apply to specific uses in addition to the General Requirements outlined above:

- (a) *Commercial, retail and office uses*
 - (i) In areas where the allotment size and location of existing buildings do not allow for on-site landscaping, off-site landscaping (hard and soft) should be considered in consultation with Council Officers. Landscaping can include flower boxes and street furniture to be implemented in such a way that it compliments and enhances the streetscape.
 - (ii) Landscaping should be provided along the full length of the road frontage of the premises (when setback from the frontage of the road), except vehicle access points, as follows:
 - have a minimum width of 2m where a physical barrier is implemented to discourage pedestrian traffic through the landscaping, otherwise 3m; and
 - have minimum width of 3m between a car park and a road frontage (2m may be considered where a physical barrier is implemented to discourage pedestrian traffic through the landscaping); or
 - where the allotment is located along a *Major Road*, have a minimum width of 5m along the full length of the road frontage.

Where it can be demonstrated that the intent of this Policy can be achieved by landscaping strips of a lesser width than specified above discretion may be exercised to allow narrower landscaped strips. Landscaping strips less than 2m in width is discouraged unless a physical barrier is implemented to prevent pedestrian traffic through the landscaping.
 - (iii) When a major commercial, retail or office complex development is applied for, Council may require a landscaping strip of up to 10m wide to protect existing streetscapes and adjoining sensitive uses against the impact of the proposed

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development. The landscaping required within the 10m strip may include a combination of the following:

- Construction of an acoustic fence (or a fence of a lesser standard such as Colorbond, concrete, etc. to Council requirements).
 - Implementation of a landscaped mound with the fence constructed at the crown of the mound.
 - Vegetated planting implemented in accordance with an approved Landscaping Plan.
- (vi) Solid fencing or walls should be provided to screen views or buffer noise to adjoining sensitive areas or other incompatible use.

(b) *Industrial uses*

- (i) The minimum area of landscaping provided should be 7.5% of the total site area except where the site is located along a major road where it should be 10%. Where the design of the development justifies lesser landscaping whilst still achieving the intent of this Policy lesser reduced could be considered.
- (ii) Landscaping should be provided along the full length of the road frontage of the premises (when setback from the frontage of the road), except vehicle access points, as follows:
- have a minimum width of 2m where a physical barrier is implemented to discourage pedestrian traffic through the landscaping, otherwise 3m; and
 - have minimum width of 3m between a car park and a road frontage; or
 - where the allotment is located along a major road, have a minimum width of 5m along the full length of the road frontage.

Where it can be demonstrated that the intent of this Policy can be achieved by landscaping strips of a lesser width than specified above discretion may be exercised to allow narrower landscaped strips. Landscaping strips less than 2m in width is not supported unless a physical barrier is implemented to prevent pedestrian traffic through the landscaping.

- (iii) When a **new** industrial estate is established or a major industrial development is applied for, Council may require a landscaping strip of up to 10m wide to protect existing streetscapes and adjoining sensitive uses against the impact of the proposed development. The landscaping required within the 10m strip may include a combination of the following:
- Construction of an acoustic fence (or a fence of a lesser standard such as Colorbond, concrete, etc. to Council requirements).
 - Implementation of a landscaped mound with the fence constructed at the crown of the mound.
 - Vegetated planting implemented in accordance with an approved Landscaping Plan.
- (vi) Solid fencing or walls should be provided to screen views or buffer noise to adjoining sensitive areas or other incompatible use.

(c) *Main entrances into towns*

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- (i) Existing vegetation should be retained unless replaced with suitable plant species to improve existing plantings.
 - (ii) Development of structures should include landscaping adjacent to roadside boundaries to provide an attractive entrance to towns as viewed from public roads and to enhance the scenic contrast between urban development and rural areas.
 - (iii) Landscaping should have a minimum width of 5m.
- (d) *Recreational areas*
- Areas should be landscaped so that the landscaping form an integral part of the design and be used to define spaces, reinforce internal networks, screen utility areas and enhance the visual amenity of the area.
- (e) *Residential Parks and Caravan and Tourist Parks*
- (i) Development should be designed to protect the privacy and amenity of occupants through landscaping and fencing, and include extensive landscaping that enhances the appearance of the locality, with a landscape buffer around the perimeter of the site as follows:
 - Landscaping should be provided along the frontages of the premises (exclusive of access ways) to a minimum width of 3m.
 - A minimum 5m wide landscaped buffer should be provided within the premises and along the boundary to any land in a Residential Zone, Country Living Zone or Rural Living Zone or any residential use.
 - A minimum 3m wide landscaped buffer should be provided within the premises and along the boundary to any land utilised for commercial, industrial or other non-residential use.
 - (ii) Existing vegetation and other natural features on the premises should be retained where possible.
- (f) *Residential uses (all types)*
- (i) Residential allotments and sites should have the appropriate orientation, area, configuration and dimensions to accommodate the provision of landscaping and private open space.
 - (ii) In the case of semi-basement car parks where cars are visible, adequate screening and landscaping should be provided.
 - (iii) Supported Accommodation (including nursing homes, hostels, retirement homes, retirement villages, residential care facilities and special accommodation houses) and housing for aged persons and people with disabilities should be provided with public and private open space and landscaping as follows:
 - It should enhance the appearance of the premises from the street and assists in buffering surrounding residential land.
 - On-site landscaping should have an area of 11m² per habitable room and not less than 30% of the total area of the site with at least 50% being in one principal location with a maximum depth to width ratio of 2:1.

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- Fences and walls should be designed to use similar or compatible materials to existing developments in the locality.
- (iv) Where more than one dwelling or unit is constructed on an allotment, whether the units are detached or semi detached, on-site landscaping should be implemented as follows:
- Incorporate front landscaping and/or terraces that contribute to the spatial and visual structure of the street while maintaining adequate privacy for apartment occupants.
 - Landscaping should be in keeping with the scale and intensity of the development and integrated with the streetscape to achieve a high standard of amenity.
 - Provide landscaping with minimum width of 2m on all road frontages.
- (v) Front fences and walls should
- enable surveillance;
 - highlight entrances to the street;
 - provide visual interest to and are compatible with the streetscape;
 - not exceed 10m in length without articulation or detailing to provide visual interest
- (vi) Where new residential estates are created an appropriate buffer with a minimum width of 5m should be established along any existing *Major Road* adjoining the site.
- (g) *Telecommunication facilities*
- These facilities should incorporate landscaping to screen the development, particularly equipment shelters and huts
- (h) *Vehicle parking areas*
- Parking areas should:
- (i) provide landscaping that will shade and enhance the appearance of the vehicle parking areas;
 - (ii) incorporate walls and landscaping that do not obscure vehicles or provide potential hiding places.
- (i) *Warehouses and buildings and structures designed for bulk handling*
- Buildings and structures should be screened from adjoining areas by landscaping as follows:
- (i) The minimum area of landscaping provided should be 7.5% of the total site area except where the site is located along a major road where it should be 10%.
 - (ii) Landscaping should be provided along the full length of the road frontage of the premises (when setback from the frontage of the road), except vehicle access points, as follows:

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- have a minimum width of 2m where a physical barrier is implemented to discourage pedestrian traffic through the landscaping, otherwise 3m; and
 - have minimum width of 3m between a car park and a road frontage; or
 - where the allotment is located along a major road, have a minimum width of 5m along the full length of the road frontage.
- (iv) Solid fencing or walls should be provided to screen views or buffer noise to adjoining sensitive areas or other incompatible use.

Enforcement

A standard condition will be placed on any approval for development where landscaping and a Landscaping Plan is required, stating a deadline by which the approved Landscaping Plan must be implemented.

6. Delegation


In terms of this Policy any Council Officer with delegated authority to approve a development has delegated authority to approve a Landscaping Plan.

7. Adoption and Review

This Policy will be reviewed as required, with the review being undertaken by the XXX Department and a report provided to Council for consideration and adoption.

8. Availability of Policy

This Policy will be available for inspection without charge at the Council's Principal Office during normal business hours, and on Council's website.
 A copy of this Policy may be obtained on payment of a nominated fee from Councils' principal office or may be down loaded from Councils' website.

Signed 

 Mayor

Signed 

 Chief Executive Officer

Date 9th May 2017

