

## Draft Verge Mowing Policy

Summary of Submission(s) received, Council's response and any changes to the Policy are outlined in the following table:

Summary Points raised in the Submission	Council's Response	Changes to the Policy
<p><b>Policy purpose states:</b> <i>Residents <b>are encouraged to maintain the verge area.</b></i></p> <p>Policy should be amended to state: <i>Residents <b>must maintain the verge area.</b></i></p> <p>This paragraph on page 2 also needs the word <b>expected</b> to be <b>deleted</b>:</p> <p><i>All areas not maintained by Council are <b>expected to be maintained by the owner and/or residents of the private property. Grassed nature strips are expected to be mowed regularly by residents, occupiers or property owners and be kept neat and tidy. This ensures a safe pedestrian environment and a presentable streetscape is maintained.</b></i></p>	<p>The intent of the Policy as written was to outline to the community the actions that will be undertaken by the Council and the actions of the community itself. Whilst the Dictionary definition of Expected; <i>to regard as likely to happen</i>, and Must; <i>to be obliged or compelled</i>, highlight a difference the Policy position was never intended to be interpreted as such.</p> <p>To remove ambiguity it is proposed that;</p> <p>a) The Second Sentence of the policy, under the heading 'Purpose' is to be amended to read; To contribute to the community's amenity residents are to maintain the verge area, generally directly in front of their property.</p> <p>b) The seventh dot point under the heading 'Requirements' is to be amended to read; All areas not maintained by Council are to be maintained by the owner and/or residents of the private property. Grassed nature strips are to be mowed regularly by residents, occupiers or property owners and be kept neat and tidy. This ensures a safe pedestrian environment and a presentable streetscape is maintained.</p>	<p>The Policy has been amended as Follows;</p> <p>The Second Sentence of the policy, under the heading 'Purpose' has been amended to read; To contribute to the community's amenity residents are to maintain the verge area, generally directly in front of their property</p> <p>The seventh dot point under the heading 'Requirements' has been amended to read; All areas not maintained by Council are to be maintained by the owner and/or residents of the private property. Grassed nature strips are to be mowed regularly by residents, occupiers or property owners and be kept neat and tidy. This ensures a safe pedestrian environment and a presentable streetscape is maintained.</p>
<p>And following on in this vein, I suggest the policy should include reference to any resident and / or ratepayer 'non-compliance' with this policy. And the possible consequences (penalty?) of any non-</p>	<p>There are no legislative penalty provisions for failure to maintain the nature strip, that would apply to situations under this policy.</p>	<p>No changes to the policy are proposed.</p>

compliance need to be included in the policy.		
To support the implementation of this Policy, Council has developed a Nature Strip and Verge Mowing Guideline. Shouldn't the public be able to view and access this Guideline?	The Guideline was placed on Council's Website in the document library under the 'Have Your Say' area. Originally only the Policy was placed on exhibition as this is the only component requiring Council adoption, as was as such resolved by Council to be placed on exhibition.	No changes to the policy are proposed
<p><b>Policy states:</b> <i>Council undertakes to maintain ..... nature strips where the resident or owner of the property is unable to undertake the work themselves and has made an application to Council and had it approved under the Verge Mowing Assistance Program.</i></p> <p>Shouldn't residents and owners be able to view and access the details of this Program – and thus know how to apply etc?</p>	The Guideline was placed on Council's Website in the document library under the 'Have Your Say' area. Originally only the Policy was placed on exhibition as this is the only component requiring Council adoption, as was as such resolved by Council to be placed on exhibition.	No changes to the policy are proposed
<p><b>Council's Have Your Say on this policy references a link:</b> <a href="#">Changes to Verge Mowing / Mowing of Nature Strips</a> and it takes me to a Council website page on this matter.</p> <p>And Council's Business Paper 3/7/19 also references this dedicated webpage and provides a link – and states: <i>A Frequently Asked Questions section will also be maintained on Council's website.</i></p> <p>However, unless I access this page through the given link, I cannot find this page on Council's website at all.</p> <p>I can access it if I conduct a search under 'verges' or 'nature strip' or 'mowing', but I believe a direct reference / link on Council's website could be more useful – perhaps place 'Changes to Verge</p>	<p>The Have your say was used as per standard advertising protocol.</p> <p>The suggestions made relate to ongoing access to information and will be taken on board as this matter progresses. Council's communication team will amend and update Council's website.</p>	No changes to the policy are proposed

<p>Mowing / Mowing of Nature Strips' under 'Environment' – or anywhere on Council's website that it can be easily found and read? (A resident may have no reason to use a search engine but could come across the useful advisement about the new verge mowing procedure when simply perusing Council's website for various information).</p>		
<p><b>Another quarter page advertisement</b> should be printed in the Auburn Review – to follow up on the one included in the Review 18/6/19</p>	<p>The Council report of the 3 July 2019 outlined the community engagement program. This is being run by Council's engagement team. The program will see Additional Flyers disturbed at the end of the months of; August, September, October and November.</p>	<p>No changes to the policy are proposed</p>
<p>What so just because the former Auburn Council Suburbs got something the other areas of Cumberland Council didn't the residents of Auburn have to suffer. Wouldn't it better to include the other areas of Cumberland rather than disadvantaging an already disadvantaged area. Obviously it looks like it is easier to take something away than to implement a service to the rest of the Council area</p>	<p>The provision of a Verge Mowing service is not generally a service provided by Councils. In Cumberland the majority of residents already mow their nature strips and the extension of this service to all of the Cumberland Council Local Government Area would have resulted in Council having to reduce or cease existing service or programs currently being provided to the community. Prior to this decision, only 4 suburbs of the 29 suburbs in the Cumberland Council Local Government Area received the Verge Mowing service.</p>	<p>No changes to the policy are proposed</p>
<p>I am also at a loss to understand the rationale behind this decision as I have just read that in the NSW Legislative Assembly on Wednesday 19th June 2019 the member for Prospect, Dr Hugh McDermott, stated that the Rates in the former three Council districts will this year, due to harmonisation, vary by an increase in Auburn of</p>	<p>The comments made by Dr McDermott refer to modelling undertaken for Council and indicate possible changes to the average residential rates in each former local government area based on one scenario for rates harmonisation. Council has not yet finalised its deliberations on this issue and it is not possible therefore to provide information</p>	<p>No changes to the policy are proposed</p>

<p>\$156, the Woodville Ward an increase of by \$85 and in Holroyd they will decrease. yes decrease by \$115.</p> <p>How can this be justified when you are decreasing a service in one of the most disadvantaged socio/economic areas in the state.</p>	<p>on the impact of the rates harmonisation process. Council will undertake extensive community engagement as part of the process.</p>	
<p>How is this revenue from the discontinuance of the verge mowing going to be utilised</p>	<p>Council will be using the resources that were previously utilised to provide a Verge Mowing service at key strategic locations / areas, along with the continuation of a pensioner (hardship assistance) service across the entire Local Government Area. Along with this Council is also proposing to add additional resources to focus on improving the presentation of the Council area, this service will focus on the provision of a quick response team within each Council ward</p>	<p>No changes to the policy are proposed</p>