



# HUME CITY COUNCIL

# LANDSCAPE GUIDELINES

## Landscape processes for developers

Landscape plans must be prepared for all open space and streetscape developments, following planning approval for the subdivision.

### Plan approval process

It is recommended that the design process for open space and streetscapes commences as soon as possible after planning permit approval is received.

- A **concept plan** and opinion of probable cost (OPC) are to be submitted to Council for all open space reserves.
- A **street tree master plan** may be submitted to Council. This will be viewed as a guide only and will not be endorsed under the permit. Street tree species cannot be selected until the civil engineering plans are approved and the available planting space is confirmed.
- Following Concept Plan review, detailed landscape design documentation is to be developed and submitted to Council.
- Landscape plans will be assessed against the Landscape Guidelines, planning requirements and other relevant documentation. Comments and feedback will be provided to the applicant.
- Revised plans are to be re-submitted with a covering letter outlining all amendments, itemised in the same format as Council's letter.
- Note that landscape plans may require more than one re-submission, depending on the complexity of the design and the number of amendments required.
- Once the landscape plans have met Council's requirements, they will be approved.
- An endorsed copy of the plan will be returned to the applicant.

### Landscape plans

#### Concept plans

The following documents are required to be submitted for assessment as part of the landscape concept plan submission for open space reserves:

- Digital landscape plan which is accurately scaled in PDF format
- a covering letter
- an OPC in Excel format

The concept plans are to be informed by a site analysis and include:

- Topography & existing levels
- Context within surrounding land use
- 1:10 & 1:100 flood levels
- Existing vegetation, rock formations, drainage lines, view lines, hilltops and structures

The concept plans are to be informed by and consider the following background documentation:

- Flora & Fauna reports
- Conservation Management Plan (CMP)
- Arboricultural reports
- Cultural Heritage reports
- Geotechnical reports
- Stormwater Management Strategies
- Council's Open Space Strategy, which details the recreational facilities to be included i.e. paths, drinking fountains, shelters, landscaping, signage, seating, playgrounds, bins and bike racks

Concept plans are to include the following general requirements:

- Reference to Council's standard drawings
- Plant species from Council's recommended species lists
- Proposed levels

### Detailed landscape plans

Detailed landscape design documentation is required for all reserves, streetscapes and landscaped areas. The following documents are required to be submitted for assessment as part of the landscape submission:

- Digital landscape plan which is accurately scaled in PDF format
- A PDF of the specification
- A covering letter
- A revised OPC in Excel format

The landscape plans are to be informed by a site analysis and include:

- Topography & existing levels
- Context within surrounding land use
- 1:10 & 1:100 flood levels
- Existing vegetation, rock formations, drainage lines, view lines, hilltops and structures

The landscape plans are to be informed by and consider the following background documentation:

- Approved civil plans
- Flora & Fauna reports
- Conservation Management Plan (CMP)
- Arboricultural reports
- Cultural Heritage reports
- Geotechnical reports
- Stormwater Management Strategies
- Council's Open Space Strategy which details the recreational facilities to be included i.e. paths, drinking fountains, shelters, landscaping, signage, seating, playgrounds, bins and bike racks

All landscape plans are to include the following general requirements:

- Cover sheet detailing site context and including the entire reserve
- Individual pages accurately scaled at 1:250 at A1
- Title block and legend, including services
- Lot boundaries
- Lot numbers

- All street names, including adjacent streets
- Plant schedule including botanical name, stock size, mature height & width, quantities/density
- Planting details
- Council's standard drawings where appropriate
- Include plant species from Council's recommended species lists
- Extent of works
- Existing and proposed services
- Pram crossings and adjacent connections
- Vehicle cross overs and maintenance access point Existing trees, their tree protection zones (TPZs) and canopy line
- Boundaries of adjacent conservation areas (including neighbouring properties)
- Individual tree identification numbers for all trees to facilitate referencing during design and audit reporting during the maintenance period

Additional requirements for streetscape plans:

- Provide a second cover page at 1:500 at A1, to try to encompass the whole stage on 1-2 pages for use during set-out and auditing
- Nominate verge widths for each street and where variation in widths occur in the same street
- Include Council's street tree offset table
- Light poles
- Crossovers
- Adjoining stage numbers, street names, lot numbers and tree species labels for reference, but faded out, so as not to appear as part of the submission





Additional requirements for reserves and other landscaped areas:

- Set out plans
- Surface treatment, levels and drainage
- Planting plan
- Fencing, screening and buffers
- Landscape details including; bollards, fencing, furniture, planting, paving, signage, walls, shelters and other structures.
- Irrigation plans
- Council requires a safety and risk assessment to be undertaken and submitted for approval with landscape plans, for sites that are in proximity to water.
- Playground design details including; drainage, layout, fall zones, under-surfacing, manufacturer's equipment specifications and colours.
- The Playground should meet the objectives of Council's Landscape Guidelines Play Space Design section.
- For custom built play pieces, an independent playground audit is required on the design. **Note that an independent audit on the entire playground prior to approval of design and again following construction.**
- Structural engineering certification of both the design and construction is required for all built structures within open space. Some examples include retaining/rock/feature walls, decks, boardwalks, bridges, basketball court slabs, stairs and entry signs.
- A building permit is always required for structures that are on title boundaries and for shelters. It is

the developer's responsibility to apply for a building permit. Council's Building Department can advise where a building permit is required.

- It is a planning permit requirement for all reserves to be fenced prior to Statement of Compliance (SOC). This includes fencing to private lots that abut reserves. Fencing can be detailed on the landscape plans, but must be installed prior to SOC, it cannot be bonded.

### Landscape plans approval

Council require the following documents to be submitted for endorsement:

- A covering letter outlining any changes that have been made
- 1 x A3 or 1 x A1 accurately scaled PDF of the plans
- A PDF and A4 hard copy of the specification
- OPC in Excel format

Plans will be formally endorsed with the permit number, and a digital copy will be returned to the applicant. If you require hard copies of plans for your records, please include an extra copy with your final submission.

- Please note that contractors are to be issued with copies of the **endorsed** plans for construction purposes.

### Construction, maintenance periods and handover

#### Pre-construction and construction

Prior to any construction or works taking place on any open space areas, the developer must have Council approved and endorsed landscape plans and a works specification. Land set aside for open space must be protected from disturbance during the initial subdivision development, such as road construction and the provision of services.

For reserves, a Site Environmental Management Plan (SEMP) is to be forwarded for approval prior to commencement of works.

Council must be contacted to arrange a pre-commencement site meeting, at least one week before the open space construction is planned to commence. This includes any works undertaken by civil contractors in reserves e.g. bulk earthworks, shared paths, drainage and retaining walls. **Works undertaken without a pre-commencement meeting, and/or supervision will not be accepted by Council, and will be required to be removed and reinstated under supervision.**

The Pre-commencement meeting is required in order to:

- Complete Council's pre-commencement checklist
- Ensure that all civil works have been completed and the site has been left in a suitable condition for landscape works to commence
- Ensure that the areas set aside for open space are consistent with those on the approved plans
- Ensure that the site is adequately prepared to protect significant features and external areas eg fencing of existing trees
- Establish a schedule of inspections during the development phase

Council's Subdivision Landscape Works Surveillance Officer will oversee the landscape construction processes through a planned and negotiated inspection routine. This will include key witness and/or hold points to ensure the landscape is constructed in accordance with the approved plans.

Council must be notified of and approve any changes to the approved works, which are identified as required during the construction period.

### **On-maintenance**

When the landscape construction is complete, a site inspection is to be requested to establish the maintenance period commencement date. This inspection will ensure that the site was developed in accordance with the approved plan. Every landscape is to be maintained by the developer for a minimum period of 2 years, after construction has been completed. This is to ensure the landscape is established when the site is handed over to Council to maintain.

**Please note that no Landscape Assets will be placed on maintenance from 1st November to the 31st of March.**



### **Required documents**

Prior to the commencement of the maintenance period, the following documentation is to be provided to Council:

- Completed On-Maintenance Checklist
- Copies of all plant and tree delivery docket, including indigenous provenance
- Building permit sign off
- Post-construction engineering certification confirming that the elements have been constructed in accordance with the certified design, for all other structural landscape elements i.e. walls, stairs, boardwalks, bridges and court slabs
- An electronic copy of as-constructed plans in PDF, DWG and ASPEC/OSPEC formats for all landscape development works, including approved irrigation systems
- As constructed specification (if changes occurred during the construction process)
- A verified schedule of **actual** costs for all works, in Excel format
- Independent audit on all playground equipment and items deemed for play i.e. nature play, after installation.
- Digital copies of playground equipment manuals and warranties
- Other equipment and furniture manuals and warranties e.g. drinking fountains, BBQ's, shelters, seats etc
- Service authority connection authorisations and agreements, including water backflow prevention devices
- A maintenance schedule for the 2-year period and proof of engagement of a suitable landscape maintenance contractor

### **On-maintenance process**

- The developer should inspect the site and contact Council when the open space/streetscape construction has been completed to their satisfaction and they have granted their landscape contractor practical completion
- An on-maintenance inspection can then be arranged
- If seeded grass has been used, Council's maintenance period commences after the grass has achieved 80% coverage and has had a first cut
- Following the inspection an email listing any defects or rectification works (if required) will be sent to the developer
- When the defect rectifications have been completed to Council's satisfaction, a letter is sent to the developer indicating that the works have been placed on maintenance.

- This notification will nominate the date that works were placed on maintenance and the date that when they are anticipated to be handed over to Council
- The maintenance period is a minimum of 2 years, but can be extended if the establishment and maintenance performed is not to Council's satisfaction
- Play equipment and items deemed for play are handed over to Council at the commencement of the maintenance period, due to Council's statutory safety maintenance obligations. Handover of the play equipment will occur as soon as the playground audit and sign off from the auditor of any defects identified as part of this audit, have been received.

### Landscape maintenance bond

A landscape maintenance bond will be held for the duration of the maintenance period

- The maintenance bond is calculated at 35% of the value of the landscape works
- Only bank cheques or cash payments will be accepted as maintenance bonds
- Maintenance bonds will be utilised by Council to maintain the landscape works at the end of the maintenance period, should the developer fail to establish and maintain the landscape to the satisfaction of Council.
- A request to return the maintenance bonds can be submitted once the works have been handed over to Council, and is to include a copy of the handover notification.



### Maintenance period

Council will conduct regular site inspections during the developer's maintenance period, to ensure the asset is establishing and being maintained appropriately. Council have a right to extend the maintenance period, if the developer fails to undertake regular maintenance.

During the maintenance period, Council would expect the following maintenance tasks to be completed:

- Water trees, garden beds and grass
- Top-dressing and fertilising of turf, path edges and garden beds as required
- Regular weed removal, including garden beds, path edges and broadleaf weeds in turf
- Regular mowing to ensure turf height is between 15mm - 100mm
- Regular spade edge maintenance/brush-cutting
- Regular rubbish and graffiti removal
- Top up of mulch
- Replace dead plants (to be undertaken from Autumn – Spring as soon as noticed and well in advance of handover, so that plants are established)
- Remove nursery stakes after 3 months of planting
- Remove tree stakes and ties after 12 months
- Ties can be cut and the tree stakes retained, if construction has not commenced or is still underway on the lot
- If after 12 months a tree is unstable in the ground, it is to be replaced
- If timber elements have been used, treat with oil a minimum of 4 times in the first 12 months, then annually
- Rectify gravel and soil wash-outs
- Maintenance of steel edging
- Seasonal flushing and repair of irrigation systems, including regular checks on system programs, station functioning, and repairs as required.
- Checking and clearing pits and drains
- Drinking fountain function check

This list is to be used as a guide only. Individual site conditions will need to be assessed and site-specific maintenance tasks are to be applied.

**Hume City Council reserves the right to extend maintenance periods where developers have failed to undertake adequate maintenance, or replacement in a timely manner**

### **Handing landscapes over to council**

The developer should request a pre-handover inspection, at least 2 months prior to the end of the maintenance period.

If defects are identified during the inspection, they will be detailed and forwarded to the developer for rectification.

If at the end of the maintenance period Council determines that rectification of more than 50% of the landscaping is necessary, the developer will be required to maintain the open space for an additional year.

The function of all WSUD assets are to be audited and reports provided, prior to handover to Council.

When the works have been completed to Council's satisfaction, final handover will occur, the landscape maintenance becomes Council's responsibility and the developer will be informed in writing.

**Please note that handover of Landscape Assets will not be accepted between the 1st Nov to the 31st of March.**

### **Landscape processes for statement of compliance**

To meet the landscape requirements for the issue of a Statement of Compliance (SOC) the developer must demonstrate that all permit conditions in relation to open space and streetscape development have been completed to Council's satisfaction.

All approved landscape works must be completed in accordance with the endorsed landscape plans and placed on maintenance prior to SOC.

Where the landscape works cannot be completed, please refer to section, Bonding of works.

### **Fees**

All landscape fees are required to be paid before SOC can be granted.

### **Road reserve fees**

In accordance with Section 43(2)(a)(iv) of the Subdivision Act 1988, the following fees apply for works within the road reserves:

- Plan checking fee: 0.75% of the value of the works, payable immediately post plan approval
- Supervision fee: 2.5% of the value of the works, payable prior to issue of Statement of Compliance

These fees will be based on the approved OPC.

### **Reserve fees**

A set fee for plan checking and supervision for all reserves, in accordance with Council's currently adopted fees and charges, is payable on all open space, drainage and conservation reserves in accordance with planning permit conditions.

The reserve fee will be calculated based on the reserve area, as shown on the Plan of Subdivision.

### **Maintenance fees**

In accordance with the Planning permit, a set maintenance bond is required to the satisfaction of Council, prior to the issue of Statement of Compliance.

### **Payment of fees**

Once fee calculations have been provided and confirmed by Council, an invoice will be issued. The developer is to provide all relevant details of the **entity to be invoiced** for fees i.e. name, ACN, address, contact, phone number, email address.

**Fees must be paid prior to SOC being issued.**

### **Bonding of works**

Outstanding works may, at the discretion of Council's CEO, be bonded at 150% of the cost of works. Bonding requests will not be processed until the landscape plans have been endorsed and the OPC approved.

Note fencing to reserves must be installed prior to SOC, it cannot be bonded.

### **Process for request to bond**

- The developer is to submit a letter to Council requesting to bond the outstanding works. The letter must include:
  - the development name and stage number
  - the OPC amount
  - the bond amount
  - the reason for bonding, rather than completing the works i.e. SOC release
  - the nature of the works to be bonded
  - the estimated timing for completion of the works
  - an attached copy of the accepted tender or approved OPC, prepared by a suitably qualified landscape architect or landscape contractor
  - Identify the form of bond as cash, bank cheque or bank guarantee
- The bond value is calculated at 150% of the value of works, exclusive of GST
- When the bonding request is received, approval to bond the works will be sought from the CEO.

- Once CEO approval has been received:
  - an invoice will be issued, where payment is to be by cheque; or
  - the developer will be notified that bonding has been approved, and the Bank Guarantee should then be submitted to Council with a covering letter addressed to the appropriate Landscape Officer, clearly stating the developer, development, development stage and works that the bond relates to

**Bonding return**

Once the works have been completed to Council’s satisfaction and placed on maintenance, the developer can request return of a bond.

- All requests for the return of bonds must be in writing, clearly stating the development, development stage, works they refer to and that these works are complete
- Requests are to include a copy of the bank guarantee or a copy of the invoice and payment receipt
- The request to return the bond must come from the same entity that lodged the original bond. If the bond is held as a Bank Guarantee, provide the address where the bond is to be sent. (Bank Guarantees are sent by registered post, and must be signed for
- When the bonding return request is received, approval to release the bond will be sought from the CEO
- Once CEO approval has been received, the bond will be released

**Definitions / acronyms**

<b>Developer</b>	The entity that is subdividing the land, but for the purpose of this document can also apply to the developer’s representative i.e. Landscape Architect
<b>OPC</b>	Opinion of Probable Cost
<b>SOC</b>	Statement of Compliance
<b>WSUD</b>	Water Sensitive Urban Design

**References**

- Hume City Council’s Landscape Guidelines – Play Space Design**
- Pre Commencement Check list**
- On Maintenance Check list**

