

FOOTPATH PROVISION & MANAGEMENT POLICY

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**PREPARED BY:
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SUTHERLANDSHIRE

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidance to staff when prioritising candidate projects for inclusion in Council's Footpath Construction Program. Council is responsible for providing and maintaining a safe, accessible, sustainable and fit for purpose network of footpaths on land under its care and control. The provision of well-maintained and efficient critical infrastructure which meets current and future needs is a key focus in Council's strategic direction.

2. APPLICATION

This policy applies to Council employees and contractors of Sutherland Shire Council when prioritising candidate projects for inclusion in Council's Footpath Construction Program.

This policy establishes where footpaths are to be provided throughout Sutherland Shire and the priorities that Council applies in developing its Footpath Construction Program. The policy will ensure that the provision of footpaths is as equitable as possible given the limitations of the Sutherland Shire's topography. Council foreshadows the ongoing provision of funding the Footpath Construction Program each year from its Long Term Financial Plan.

3. PRINCIPLES

3.1 Application of Principles

No one principle should be applied to the detriment of another. Principles must be collectively considered and applied to the extent that is reasonable and practicable in the circumstances.

3.2 Provision of Fit for Purpose Footpaths

Council is responsible for the provision and maintenance of accessible and safe pedestrian facilities and will provide fit for purpose footpaths within roads and reserves wherever appropriate and practical.

3.3 Derive Greatest Benefit from Available Funds

Project prioritisation is required to guide Footpath Construction Program development in such a way as to achieve the greatest benefits at the earliest possible time.

3.4 Prioritise all Projects

All projects will be classified and delivered in order of priority from 1 to 3 with Priority 1 being the most important priority. Where physically and economically practical, Council will provide footpaths in the following priority order.

3.5 Priority One Projects – Risk Management

3.5.1 Trip Hazards in Existing Paved Footpaths

Council has a duty of care to ensure that its existing footpath assets do not present a hazard to people using them. All footpaths in the Sutherland Shire are to be inspected annually as part of a proactive program of routine maintenance.

Where trip hazards are identified, maintenance attention is provided however, where records show excessive ongoing maintenance costs, footpath reconstruction (renewal) becomes the preferred response.

3.5.2 Topography Forcing Pedestrians to Use the Road Carriageway

Some nature strips are too rugged for pedestrian use and force pedestrians, including school children, to walk along the road carriageway. Where an alternate nature strip is not available and there are parked vehicles in the kerbside lane, it may force pedestrians to use vehicle travelling lanes exposing them to the risk of a traffic accident.

3.5.3 Providing a Consistent Standard of Access within the Existing Footpath Network

Paved footpaths provide a valuable facility to many people including those with limited mobility. Many footpaths do not provide an adequate and accessible footway and pedestrian ramp to the road surface. Priority improvements for accessibility form part of the Footpath Construction Program for the retrofitting of complying pedestrian ramps.

3.6 Priority Two Projects – Filling Gaps in the Existing Footpath Network

There are many gaps in the existing footpath network and priority has been given to gaps in close proximity to shopping centres, schools, public facilities, medical establishments, aged person facilities and other significant generators of pedestrian activity.

3.7 Priority Three Projects – Extending the Existing Footpath Network

The prioritisation of candidate footpath construction projects to extend the footpath network is based on satisfying pedestrian needs and is influenced by:

- Volume of pedestrian traffic;
- Proximity of bus stops, rail stations, shopping centres, schools, public facilities, medical establishments, aged care facilities and other significant generators of pedestrian activity.
- Volume and speed of vehicular traffic - High volumes and/or speed of vehicular traffic prevent use of the road carriageway as a shared facility by pedestrians and can necessitate the provision of a footpath on both sides of a roadway;
- Topography of the nature strip - rugged nature strips that pedestrians cannot use them and are forced to walk on the road carriageway.

3.8 Justify Where a Footpath is Warranted Either on One or Both Sides of a Street

3.8.1 Footpath Required on Both Sides of Street

Roads in this category justify footpaths on both sides due to the volume and/or speed of vehicular traffic as well as the volume of pedestrian traffic. Consideration is given to constructing footpaths on both sides of a street for:

- Arterial Roads and major Collector Roads;
- Roads with central medians and/or a carriageway width greater than 9 metres;
- Commercial precincts - frontage of commercial premises plus 200m either side;
- In the vicinity of schools, retirement villages, sports grounds and other public facilities which are significant generators of pedestrian activity - frontage of facility plus 200m either side;
- An area of high demand (such as a worn track along an existing verge).

3.8.2 Footpath Required on One Side of Street

Consideration is given to constructing footpaths on one side of the street for local and minor Collector Roads (excluding short cul-de-sacs). Streets in this category may or may not have significant pedestrian activity generators on the side containing the footpath. Local Roads and minor Collector Roads can be crossed in safety with reasonable care to access the footpath on one side of the street.

Footpaths are constructed in long cul-de-sac roads to an appropriate termination point approximately 250m short of the cul-de-sac bowl.

3.9 Apply Footpath Standards

Footpaths are designed and constructed in accordance with Austroads' Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, Part 13 and Council's Public Domain Design Manual. Wide footpaths are only provided in the vicinity of high pedestrian generators such as commercial precincts, schools and the hospitals. The preferred alignment for a paved footpath is 900mm off the property boundary however the alignment may vary to suit site constraints including topography, trees, utility services trees and the profile of existing vehicular footpath crossings (driveways).

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Responsible Officer

The Team Leader Road & Footpath Assets is the Responsible Officer for this Policy and is responsible for the development of the rolling Footpath Construction Program.

4.2 Directors

Directors are responsible for ensuring their Division adheres to the requirements of this Policy and provide guidance in respect of achievement of the strategic objectives of the Policy within their division and the organisation.

The Director Shire Infrastructure has the authority to waive or modify the requirements of this Policy as needed to meet demonstrated operational requirements.

4.3 Employees

Employees must adhere to the requirements of this Policy and operate within its authorities.

5. POLICY COMPLIANCE

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Team Leader Road & Footpath Assets.

6. RECORD KEEPING, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

Council adheres to and complies with the NSW State Records Act 1998 and Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 through its Access to Information Policy and Privacy Management Plan.

7. BREACHES OF POLICY

Breaches of this Policy will be dealt with in accordance with normal disciplinary procedures and will be advised to the Chief Executive Officer and/or Director Shire Infrastructure, via the Manager Asset Services, where appropriate.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Public Domain Design Manual
- Public Domain Technical Manual

9. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

- Local Government Act 1993 (NSW)
- State Records Act 1998 (NSW)
- Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)
- Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)
- Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Civil Liabilities Act 1936

10. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Term	Meaning
Footpath	A paved area within the verge in the road reserve constructed for pedestrian travel. Unpaved areas are referred to as nature strips.
Asphalt Footpath	Construction of paved footpath using asphaltic concrete.
Local Roads	Primarily used to gain access to the property. These roads have the lowest speed limit and carry low volumes of traffic.
Collector Roads	Low-to-moderate-capacity roads which serve to move traffic from the Local Road network to the Arterial Road network.
Arterial Roads	Major through roads that are expected to carry large volumes of traffic and have a higher speed limit.
Construction	Provision of a new footpath where one previously did not exist.
Reconstruction	Replacement of an existing footpath with a new footpath.

End of Document

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