

1. Reason for the Policy

Prior to April 2013, Council mowed urban road berms on a regular basis, with the exception of berms already mowed by adjacent landowners. The degree of this mowing varied between different communities and for rural townships such as Fox, Franz, Haast, Kumara and Ross the mowing has continued to be carried out and is funded through rates for township maintenance of these areas. For the Hokitika and Kaniere areas the maintenance contractor continued to mow many areas within these 2 towns at the instruction of the Board of Directors. This free mowing ceased in 2020 as the costs to the contractor became too great to continue to run this operation at a loss.

Without ongoing consideration of maintenance, berms could become unsightly and overgrown. However it is unreasonable for Council to accept the ongoing cost of maintenance of all road berms without a significant rise in district wide rates. This Policy aims to create parameters to enable unsightly berms to be maintained without creating a situation where all berms are expected to be maintained throughout the District.

1.1 Scope

This policy applies to all berms within the greater Hokitika and Kaniere urban areas.

1.2 Commencement

This policy comes into force on 1 July 2021.

1.3 Definitions

Berm : This is the area within the road corridor between the edge of the formed road and the property boundary.

Road Corridor: The area between property boundaries on either side of a formed or unformed road legal road.

Urban Area: The area as defined within the current District Plan that denotes urban areas, also any area defined within the current District Plan as a township. This also includes but is not limited to commercial areas.

WAP : Work Access Permit (WAP). This is a permit issued by the Road Controlling Authority (RCA) to carry out works within the legal road corridor.

RCA : Road Controlling Authority. In the case of this Policy the RCA could be either Westland District Council or Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency.

2. Policy

It is the property owner/residents responsibility in urban areas to mow the road berm adjacent to their property.

Council will mow the following:

- Grassed traffic islands and medians.
- Berms adjacent to reserves (funded from the reserve budget).
- Berms adjacent to Council utility plants such as but not limited to, waste water treatment plants, water treatment plants & pumping stations of any kind.
- Berms at the entrance to any Council walkways
- Should a property owner refuse to mow a berm then Council will instruct it's contractors to mow on a minimum 6 monthly basis or at such time as the vegetation becomes either a fire hazard or traffic hazard as deemed by council officers.
- Private property owners can apply to Council for the berms adjoining their property to be mown. Each application will be reviewed on a case by case basis and may or may not be approved by Council on its own merits. Applications must be made no later than January 31 in any given year in order for Council to review, approve/decline, and set budget for the following financial year. Applications must be made annually by the

property owner, failure to apply will result in council ceasing regular mowing. A form for applications will be available to collect from the Council Offices or available for download off the council website.

- Council may mow berms in any other circumstances where Council considers it necessary or reasonable to do so. Any decision made to mow a berm under these exceptions is at Council's discretion.

General Rules for berms

- Should a property owner wish to landscape any part or all of their berm an application must be made for specific approval from the Transportation Manager, approval is not guaranteed and will be granted on a case by case basis.
- All berm landscaping is there at the permission of Council and may at any time need to be excavated or modified by either Council or any utility provider such as (but not limited to) power, telecommunications, water, stormwater, waste water etc.. Any reinstatement of landscaped berms will be at the expense of the property owner. Council's reinstatement requirements are for grass only as a minimum.
- Should a modified/landscaped berm become dangerous or unsafe Council reserves the right to instruct the property owner to make it safe or, act immediately in the interests of public safety to make it safe.
- If at any stage Council decides at its discretion to revert the landscaped/modified berm to a grass berm this must be carried out at the property owners cost.
- Where a berm is modified by works carried out by a Council contractor or any utility provider the berm is required to be reinstated in line with the requirements set in the issued WAP.
- Developers are responsible for the establishment and mowing of new grass berms that are sown as part of subdivision construction. Once the maintenance period of the work has expired, the berm mowing will be managed in accordance with this Policy.

3. Reporting

The Operations Manager will produce an annual confidential report to Council at each February Council meeting. This report shall provide the list of current applicants that wish to have berms maintained by Council. Each applicant must have provided a compelling reason for Council to assess and approve or decline. The report will also outline the approximate cost of the extra mowing that will be carried out.

Once the list of approved applicants has been set the budget allocation for the next financial year will be included into the workings for the upcoming annual plan.

4. Related Documents and Acts

There are no relevant documents or acts for this policy.

5. Policy Review

A review of this policy will take place in June 2024.

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