

GREEN CAR PARKS

Greening your Unley car park & cooling the neighbourhood

As our climate warms, urban areas are feeling the heat—especially large paved or asphalt spaces like car parks.

But there's a simple, low cost, high-impact solution: planting trees.

Planting trees cools the space, lowers energy costs, boosts foot traffic and customer spend, enhances employee productivity and creates experiences that shoppers value.

Greening your car park is good for business, good for people, and good for Unley.

Let's keep Unley leafy for future generations.

THE CITY of Unley

An univiting, hot car park



BEFORE

Car park areas without greenery can be more than 20 degrees hotter.

A neighbourhood to linger in



AFTER

Greening attracts and keeps customers, cools the neighbourhood and adds value to your building.

Green your car park - grow your impact

1 Customers linger longer & spend more
Well-treed commercial areas encourage people to stay longer, spending up to 9-12% more on goods and services.

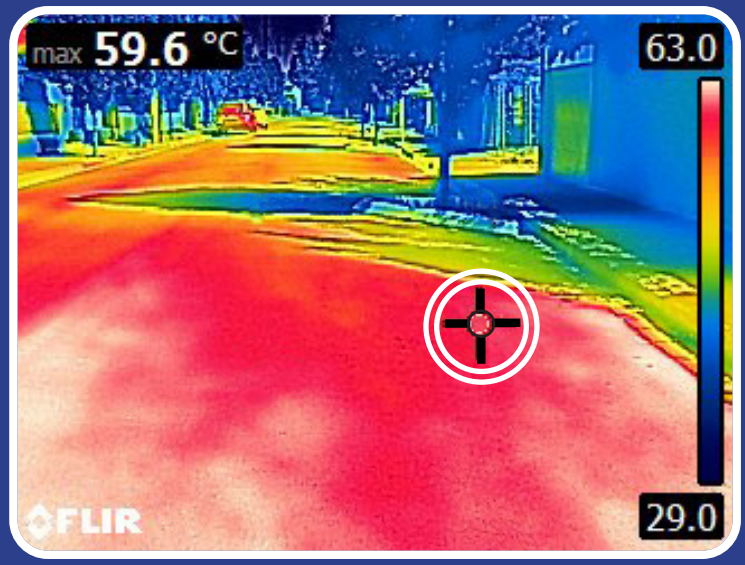
2 First impressions matter
Lush greenery replaces dead or weedy patches, elevating your business's kerb appeal and attracting more visitors.

3 Increase rental income
Creating a more attractive environment adds more value to your business and may allow your rental income to increase.

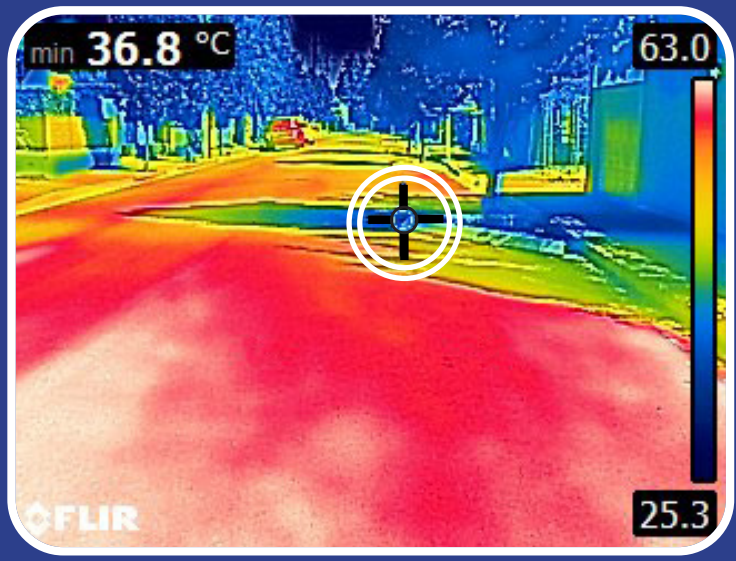
4 Energy cost savings
Shading the western façade of a building with trees can drop total energy costs by 5% to 10% in summer.

5 People work better
People working in green environments have annual productivity savings averaged at $2,990 per employee.

6 Beat the heat, boost comfort
Shade from new trees and plants cools asphalt by more than 20°C, making your carpark more comfortable for customers and staff.



59.6°C asphalt in sun



36.8°C asphalt in shade

Surface temperatures can be more than 20°C lower when shaded by trees.

Location: Enterprise Street, Hyde Park.

What you can do...

Quick Green Fix

LOW-COST, IMMEDIATE IMPACT

Revive existing but neglected car park gardens between businesses.

A combination of larger trees and low plantings retain view lines to businesses.

EXAMPLE
Replanting empty beds with a tree and drought-resistant shrubs.



Suggested plants



Native Rosemary
Westringia fruticosa



Bottlebrush
Callistemon 'Little John'



Common Emu Bush
Eremophila glabra

See Plant List for more plant information

Car Park Upgrade

MODERATE COST, STRUCTURED GREENING

Retrofit car parks to add trees: remove bitumen and paving for garden strips, install wheel stops, and plant shade trees.

Use unused spaces (corners, dead zones, strips), or convert a parking bay into a landscaped island.

EXAMPLE
Converting asphalt edges into tree-lined lush, cooling green borders.



Suggested plants



Goodenia
Goodenia ovata



Blue-flax lily
Dianella longifolia



Tuckeroo
Cupaniopsis anacardiodes

See Plant List for more plant information

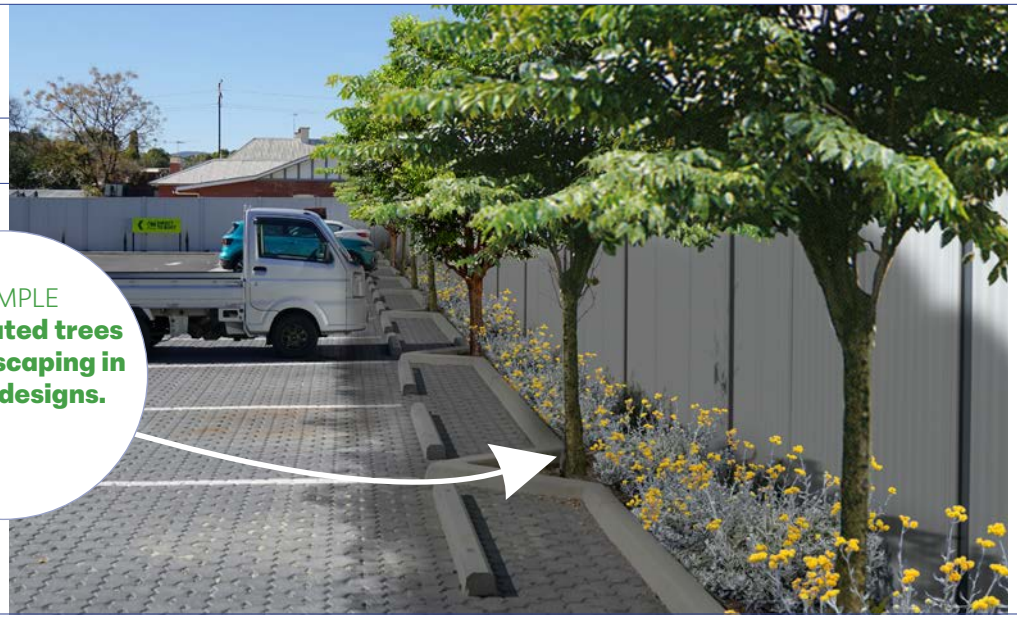
What you can do...

Build Green

HIGH-IMPACT, FUTURE-FOCUSED

New developments provide the opportunity to integrate shade trees and green garden beds into car park designs from day one. Cost-effective water sensitive urban design solutions (see diagram) can help manage stormwater, improve water quality, and support healthy vegetation growth.

EXAMPLE
Coordinated trees and landscaping in building designs.



Suggested plants



Yellow buttons
Chrysocephalum apiculatum



Cushion Bush
Leucophyta brownii



Field Maple
Acer campestre 'Elsrijk'

See Plant List for more plant information

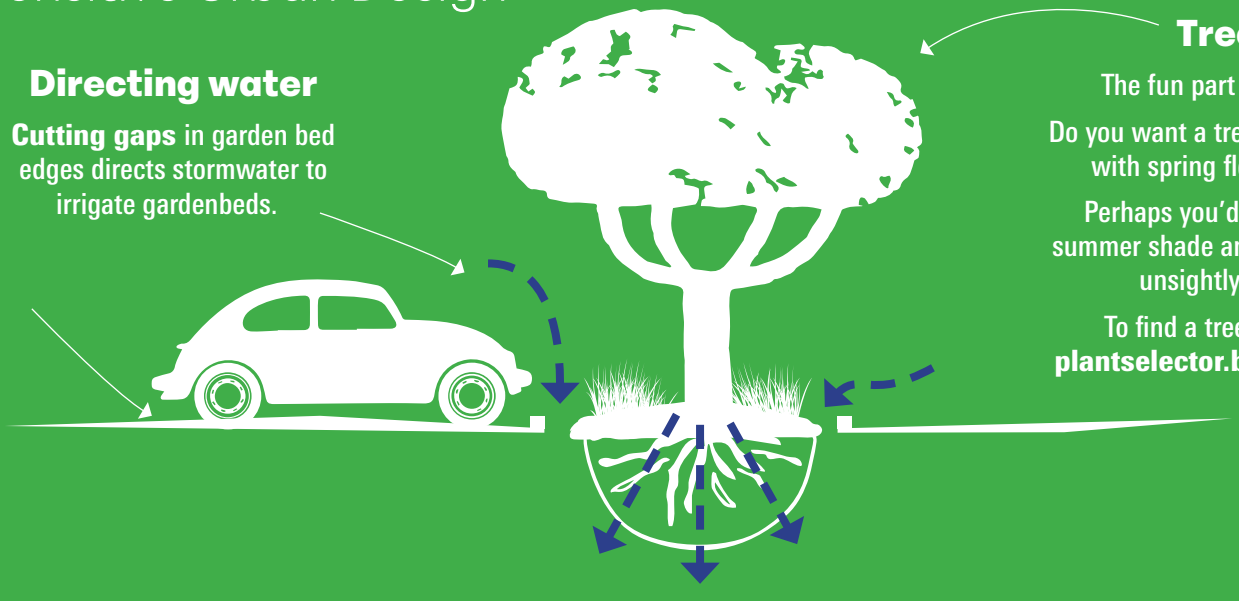
WSUD Water Sensitive Urban Design

Preserving asphalt

Shaded asphalt **lasts longer** and reduces the need for expensive repairs & resurfacing.

Directing water

Cutting gaps in garden bed edges directs stormwater to irrigate gardenbeds.



Tree Selection

The fun part is picking out your tree.

Do you want a tree that creates a visual impact with spring flowers or autumn colour?

Perhaps you'd prefer a tree that provides summer shade and winter warmth, screens an unsightly area or is fuss free?

To find a tree that's right for you visit **plantselector.botanicgardens.sa.gov.au**

Plants to choose **Some suggestions for car park planting**

Small trees <8m



Silver Banksia
Banksia marginata



Little Kurrajong
Brachychiton bidwillii



Water Gum
Tristaniopsis laurina



'Forrest Pansy' Eastern Redbud
Cercis canadensis



Kings Park Bottlebrush
Callistemon



'Nana' Yellow Bloodwood
Corymbia eximia



Dwarf Lemon Scented Gum
Corymbia citriodora



Dwarf Apple
Angophora hispida



Japanese Pagoda Tree
Sophora japonica



Field Maple
Acer campestre 'Elsrijk'



Bronze Cottonwood
Hibiscus tiliaceus



Tuckeroo
Cupaniopsis anacardiodes

For more planting options as well as nursery stockist information:
unley.sa.gov.au/trees
greenadelaide.sa.gov.au

Medium-large trees <8-15m



Griffith Pink
Brachychiton populneus 'discolour'



Chinese Pistachio
Pistacia chinensis



Maidenhair Tree
Ginkgo biloba



Golden Elm
Ulmus glabra 'Lutescens'



Maple 'Autumn Blaze'
Acer x freemanii 'Jeffersred'



Lemon-scented Myrtle
Backhousa citridora

Plants to choose

Some suggestions for car park planting

PLANTING TIP

Make sure the hole you dig for your tree is slightly deeper and twice as wide as the plant container.

Larger shrubs Screening 2-5m



Silver Cassia
Senna artemisioides
(up to 3m)



Common Boobialla
Myoporum insulare
(up to 3m)



Native Rosemary
Westringia fruticosa
(up to 2m)



Bottlebrush
Callistemon 'Little John'
(up to 1.5m)



Native Lilac
Hardenbergia violacea
(up to 5m)



Purple Hop Bush
Dodonaea viscosa
(up to 3m)

Low plants Small & tough



Yellow Buttons
Chrysocephalum apiculatum



Round-leaf Pigface
Disphyma crassifolium ssp.clavellatum



Mat Rush
Lomandra longifolia 'Tanika'



Mat Rush
Lomandra confertifolia 'Seascape'



Kangaroo Grass
Themeda Triandra



Spiny Saltbush
Rhagodia spinescens



Cushion Bush
Lecophyta brownii



Common Emu Bush
Eremophila glabra



Pink Fan Flower
Scaevola aemula



Goodenia
Goodenia ovata

Quick & easy tips

Right tree, right location. Make sure the tree has room to grow. Pick a tree whose mature size will fit the scale of the place.

Purchasing larger, established trees will see you getting the greening benefits sooner.

Before you dig make sure you know where your utilities are. Look up your location on *Before You Dig Australia*.

Maintenance & TLC. Some trees require more cleanup and tidying than others so consider these factors when choosing a tree.

Smaller plantings make a great visual and cooling impact, but will require more frequent care and maintenance to keep them looking good.

Watering. During the cooler autumn and winter months make sure you water your tree at least once a month after you have first planted your tree. During summer, trees will need a deep regular watering (once a week) for the first three years. After that they will survive with seasonal rainfall and appreciate a deep water before heatwaves and during hotter, drier months.

Don't have space for a tree? Consider vines or growing plants in pots to add more visual amenity. You could also cool your car park by using solar reflective (light-coloured), porous surface materials or coat asphalt with reflective surface sealants to create cooler surfaces.

Autumn and winter are usually the best time to plant your tree.

We are here to help

Contact us for more information on suggested plants and nursery stockists or advice on how you can optimise your car park layout to include green elements without compromising parking efficiency and functionality.

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