

Relevant Information for Council

FILE: X111526 **DATE:** 13 February 2025

TO: Lord Mayor and Councillors

FROM: Veronica Lee, Executive Director City Services

THROUGH: Monica Barone PSM, Chief Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Information Relevant To Item 7.4 - Public Exhibition - Weed Management Policy and Pesticide Use Notification Plan

For Noting

This memo is for the information of the Lord Mayor and Councillors.

Purpose

To provide further detail about the weed management techniques researched as part of the City's weed management review but not carried through to the trial stage.

Background

At the meeting of the Environment and Climate Change Committee on 10 February 2024, further information was sought as to the weed management techniques researched as part of the City weed management review but not carried through to the trial stage.

The City's weed management review involved an in-depth desktop study where research, benchmarking and consultation with other authorities, industry and universities identified a range of potential glyphosate alternatives. A risk assessment of these alternatives informed the trial approach.

The alternatives: flame, infrared and ultraviolet were researched but not trialled due to the reasons outlined in the below table.

Glyphosate alternative weed management	Reason for trial exclusion
Flame	<u>Risk profile: environmental, safety, reputational and financial.</u> High energy inputs (propane fuel). Propane is a byproduct of natural gas processing and crude oil refining, and as a fossil fuel derivate its use is not consistent with the City's net zero targets. Difficult to target weeds within bush restoration and garden bed assets without off-target damage of surrounding plants and insects. Fire hazard restricts use to limited application areas and cooler times of the year (which is outside of peak growing season and less effective). Manual handling and burns risk. Ineffective as it requires multiple applications, especially for grass weeds. Cost prohibitive for equipment and additional labour for ineffective quality outcome.
Infrared	<u>Risk profile: service continuity, environmental, safety, reputational and financial.</u> Emerging technology in Australia with greater focus on agricultural sector implementation for treating fallow fields or between cropping. Current technology unfit for the City's application. Lack of ongoing technical support if the City were to purchase. High energy inputs (propane fuel). Propane is a byproduct of natural gas processing and crude oil refining, and as a fossil fuel derivate its use is not consistent with the City's net zero targets. Manual handling and burns risk. Ineffective as it requires multiple applications, especially for grass weeds. Cost prohibitive for equipment, additional labour for ineffective quality outcome.

Glyphosate alternative weed management	Reason for trial exclusion
Ultraviolet radiation	<u>Risk profile: service continuity, availability.</u> Used in Europe and the USA however technology is only emerging in Australia and not yet available for commercial application. Australian universities are leading the way in research on the application of ultraviolet radiation to kill aquatic weeds.

Memo from Veronica Lee, Executive Director City Services

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Approved

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Chief Executive Officer