Greener cities are cooler cities in summer: new guide reveals how

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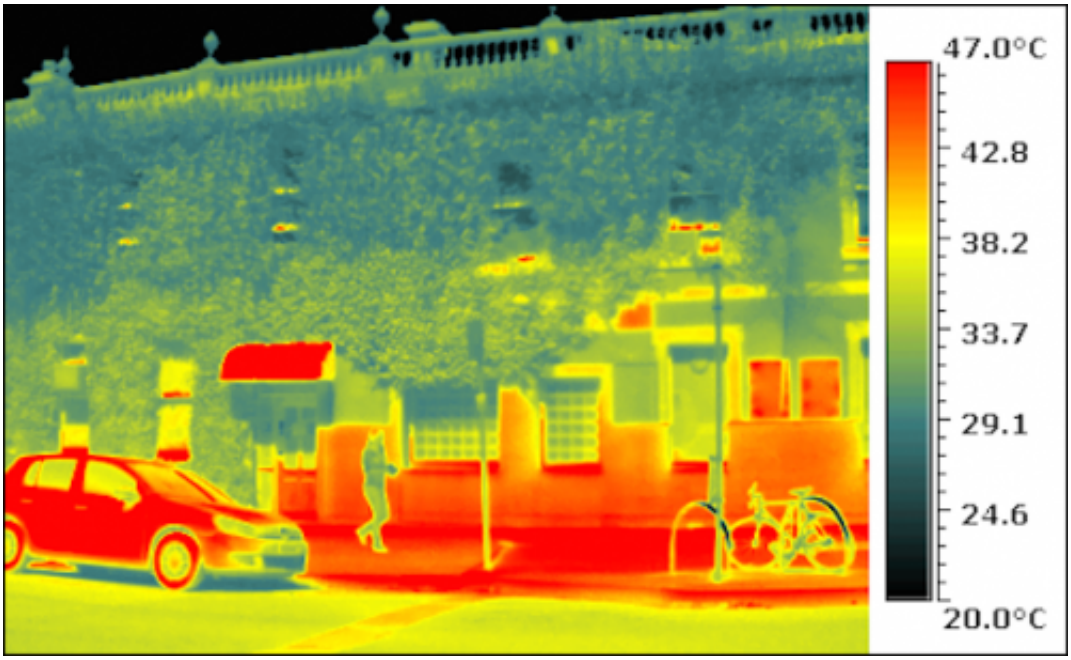

Green wall

Australian councils are being urged to take up new guidelines in green urban planning to create cooler cites with greener landscapes to reduce the risk of heat stress.

Australia is experiencing a trend of hotter temperatures and as a result heat stress is now a serious health problem for Australians who live in urban areas.

Research published in the *Journal of Landscape and Urban Planning*, led by the University of Melbourne suggest interventions to cool our urban hot spots using features like green facades.

Guideline author Dr Nick Williams from Resource Management and Geography said, "Our research has developed a framework for better urban green infrastructure that can reduce urban air and surface temperatures."

"During the day buildings and streets absorb solar radiation and release the heat at night keeping urban areas warmer than the surrounding countryside. But this can be tempered with a range of effective urban green designs. This includes greater use of trees, green roofs and facades, " said Dr Williams.

Using thermal images Dr Williams and his collaborators at Melbourne and Monash Universities studied the City of Port Phillip as a typical urban environment.

"The City of Geelong has adopted the framework and we are hoping other Australian councils and shires will follow suit as its now community health issue."

The research identified 'hot spots' and addresses factors like street geometry, soil and water availability, maintenance issues and community behaviour.

Provided by University of Melbourne