



Planting vegetation on council controlled road verge

Road verges, also known as nature strips or road reserves, play an important role in the environmental health, visual appeal and character of a neighbourhood. Sunshine Coast Council supports the concept of alternative road verge treatments where suitable.

The traditional road verge within our region consists of grass and a council provided street tree, however there are opportunities for residents to beautify or enhance these spaces.

Where gardens are planted, they can be places for learning and sharing about sustainable living practices, encouraging access to, and consumption of, fresh and locally grown produce – and enhanced community wellbeing and mental health.

There are two opportunities for planting vegetation on road verges:

1. **NO PERMIT OR APPLICATION REQUIRED**
 - Self-assessment where vegetation meets the self-assessment criteria at all times, refer to Appendix A, or
2. **PERMIT REQUIRED**
 - An approved permit application - 'Planting Vegetation on Council Controlled Road Verge' for anything outside of the self-assessment criteria (application form available on Council's website)

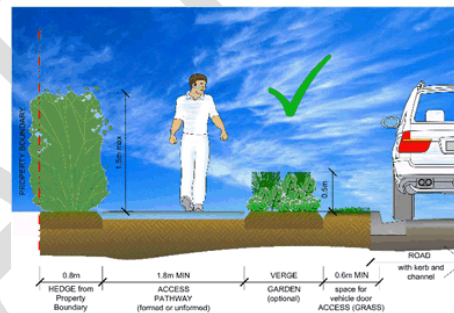


1. SELF-ASSESSMENT (no permit or application required)

What are the general planting options under self-assessment?

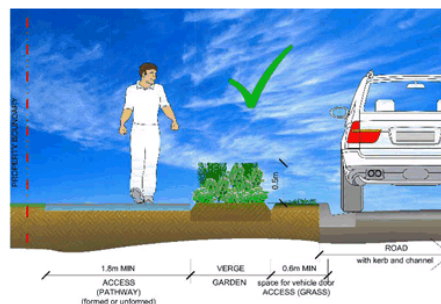
Hedges

Hedges can be planted against the property boundary, can encroach out 800mm from boundary line and can grow to 1.5m in height at maturity. A 1m setback from driveway is required to maintain sight lines. The 'Road Verge Planting List - Hedging Species' provides a list of approved species (list available on council's website). Further criteria applies, refer to Appendix A.



Garden beds

Low growing gardens can be planted anywhere within the road verge footprint where appropriate access is maintained. Vegetation may be up to 500mm in height at maturity and is required to be set back from the road edge by 600mm. The 'Road Verge Planting List - Species to 500mm' provides a list of approved species (list available on council's website). Further criteria applies, refer to Appendix A.



APPENDIX A: SELF-ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

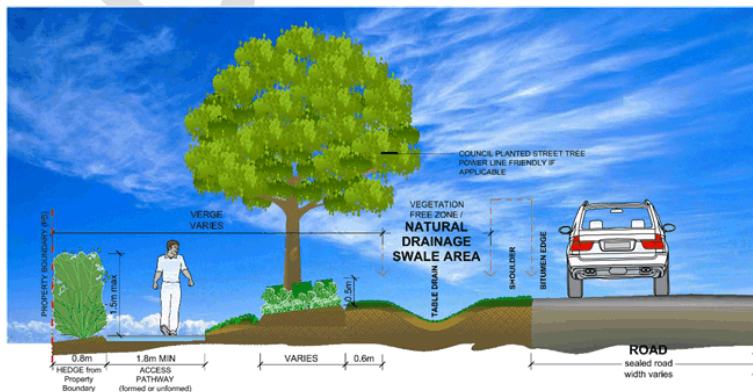
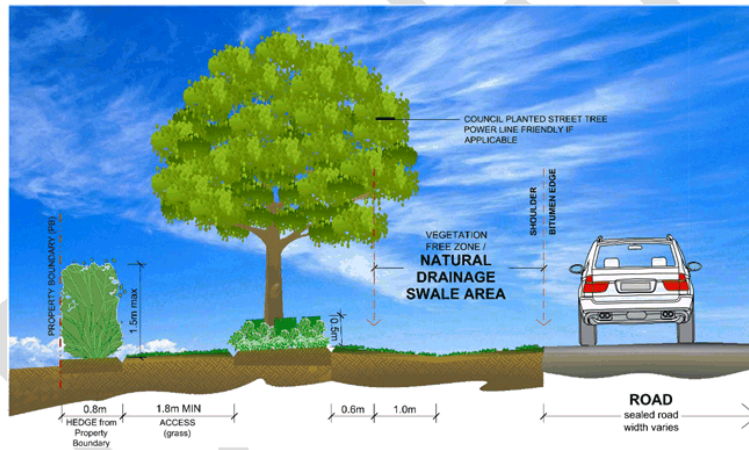
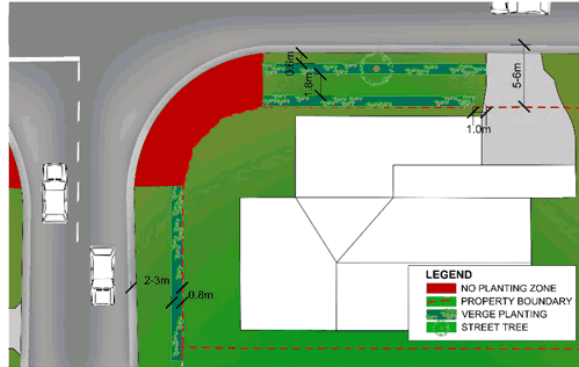
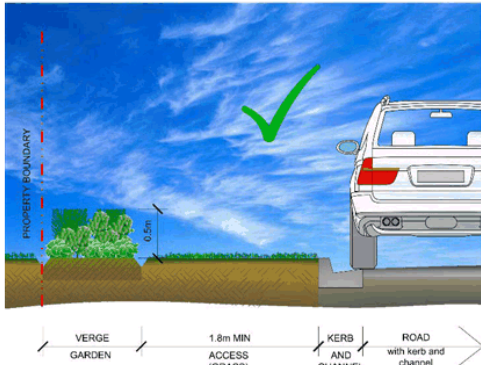
To be eligible for planting under self-assessment the proposed vegetation must satisfy all criteria in the following list at all times. Also refer to diagrams within for examples of where to plant on the road verge for self-assessment. If you are unsure, please contact customer service on (07) 5475 7272.

Self-assessment criteria - Requirements for planting vegetation:
Hedges:
<input type="checkbox"/> Are planted against the property boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Are maintained to not exceed 1.5m in height
<input type="checkbox"/> Are maintained to not encroach further than 800mm from the property boundary
<input type="checkbox"/> Has a minimum 1m from both sides of driveway left clear of vegetation for sight lines
Garden beds:
<input type="checkbox"/> Will be maintained to not exceed 500mm in height at maturity
<input type="checkbox"/> Has at least 600mm left clear between the garden and road edge for individuals to access the garden and motor vehicles parked along the roadside and a location to place bins for rubbish collection
All other criteria:
<input type="checkbox"/> The plantings complement the normal use of footpaths for pedestrians and cyclists
<input type="checkbox"/> Where there is no existing formed path within the immediate neighbourhood, a minimum 1.8m width for pedestrian access is left clear (Note: the pathway can meander)
<input type="checkbox"/> Has a set back from pathways to prevent mature growth from encroaching over pathway. <i>The spread of the plant should be considered when selecting species. Refer to the Road Verge Planting List for details on width / spread.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Has a set back of 1m from the base of powerpoles or other utilities to maintain clear access
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintains view sight lines, for pedestrian or vehicular traffic when using the road, and entering or exiting a driveway, and to maintain vistas from any premise
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintains a vegetation clear zone on corner points (at road intersections), see diagram within. <i>A council officer can provide advice should you have any queries.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Is not located on a verge that adjoins a single lane road
<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetation is planted between road edge and property boundary only (e.g. not within a median strip)
<input type="checkbox"/> Plant species are listed within the 'Road Verge Planting List' available from council's website
<input type="checkbox"/> Is located along a road with a traffic speed limit up to, and including, 50 kilometres per hour. <i>(Residents living on a road with a speed greater than 50km/h will need to apply for and receive a permit before planting. A council officer can provide advice should you have any queries.)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintains a vegetation clear zone within existing drainage (e.g. is not planted across road side swales, table drains or bio retention devices)
<input type="checkbox"/> Does not present a hazard or risk to the environment or members of the public
<input type="checkbox"/> Does not include artificial turf
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilises only bio-degradable materials
<input type="checkbox"/> Does not include any type of structure or solid material such as concrete or solid edging, star pickets, fencing, guide wires, or loose materials such as rocks, paving, pebbles or stones
<input type="checkbox"/> Preserves street trees and avoids planting, pruning or removals of trees
<input type="checkbox"/> Does not include an irrigation system
<input type="checkbox"/> Does not interfere with under or above ground services (refer to Dial Before You Dig online service to check for utilities within the proposed location)
<input type="checkbox"/> Produce can be shared with the community at no cost (i.e. will not be used for commercial purposes)
<input type="checkbox"/> Will be maintained by the applicant to ensure it is safe and tidy at all times using sustainable and safe working practices

Note that developer approved infrastructure and landscaping is exempt from this criteria.



Further examples of where to plant on the road verge for self-assessment



What type of species can I plant?

The Road Verge Planting List provides a selection of approved species that fit with the character and theme of the Sunshine Coast.

Can I plant a street tree on my nature strip?

No, council has a long-term goal to establish a healthy and sustainable street tree network across the region. Council facilitates the provision to plant a street tree in the proposed location where there is opportunity and residents are supportive.

If you are wanting a street tree please lodge a request via council's customer service.

What types of street trees might be supported?

Council officers assess each request on a case by case basis and will provide advice on the most suitable species and location for the proposed street tree in consultation with residents.

Who is responsible for the maintenance if I plant a garden on the road verge?

You are expected to undertake all maintenance and keep the garden well presented and in a safe condition. It is your responsibility to ensure that the vegetation adheres to the criteria or permit conditions at all times. Council may intervene and undertake enforcement action if the vegetation poses an associated risk or does not meet the criteria or permit conditions.

Note that as the garden is on public land it is expected to remain available for community benefit at all times. Council may at any time modify or remove vegetation should it be necessary.

What is Dial Before You Dig?

Dial Before You Dig is a free referral service for information on locating underground utilities anywhere in Australia. This is to ensure there are no utility services located within the proposed area of works that may be conflicted. Refer to www.1100.com.au

Can I start planting straight away?

Yes, you can start planting at any time as long as the proposed garden meets the self-assessment criteria set out in this fact sheet at all times (refer to Appendix A). If you wish to obtain a permit for gardens outside the scope

of the self-assessment criteria then you must wait until you have received formal approval.

What happens if the garden is non-compliant?

If the garden does not meet the self-assessment criteria, residents are invited to make the garden compliant or obtain a permit. If there is already an approved permit, council may formally request the resident to make changes to meet the permit conditions, or remove the garden. In all cases, council will work with the residents to achieve the best outcome.

What happens if I didn't plant the garden?

If you move into a home with an established verge garden, you are welcome to take on responsibility of the garden. You may choose to retain the garden by ensuring it complies with the self-assessment criteria or obtain a permit. Alternatively, you may remove the garden and reinstate the verge to natural turf. Council can also assist with this process.

What happens if I move away?

If you are leaving a road verge garden you once maintained, it would be appreciated for you to invite the next home owner to take care of it. If they do not wish to take care of it, please reinstate the verge to natural turf.

How do I lodge a permit?

If you wish to plant a garden outside the self-assessment criteria, you may submit a *Planting Vegetation on Council Controlled Road Verge* permit application form (available on council's website). A site assessment and advice may be provided by council officers to help design a safe and sustainable garden.

Are there alternative options?

Yes there are a range of community gardens located across the Sunshine Coast. Refer to the councils website for more information.

How to contact Council?

Sunshine Coast Council
www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au
 mail@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au
 T 07 5475 7272 F 07 5475 7277
 Locked Bag 72 Sunshine Coast Mail Centre Qld 4560

Current as at Month 2018