

Clearing vegetation within a council controlled road verge

Road verges, also known as nature strips or road reserves, play an important role in the environmental health and also 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, footpath and a council provided street tree. There are opportunities for residents to beautify or enhance these spaces.

To apply for this activity you must complete the permit application form 'Clearing vegetation within a council controlled road verge'.

This category is assessed on a case by case basis.

An application fee of \$253 applies. A bond of either \$255, \$510 or \$2,040 is applicable pending the extent of works.

Why a permit?

Certain activities conducted in these spaces require a local law approval under *Sunshine Coast Regional Council Subordinate Local Law No.1 (Administration) 2016 Schedule 4 - Alteration or improvement to local government controlled areas and roads*. This is to ensure the function of road verges are not compromised and community safety is upheld.

Services such as water, sewerage, power and telecommunications may be located within the road verge footprint and can be damaged during digging activities. A permit also ensures that under and above ground utilities have been checked prior to any works being approved.

What type of requests would likely be approved?

- clearing vegetation or street trees assessed as "low value"

Requests are usually considered during property improvements that do not fall under a development certification process, for example constructing a fence. Residents may contact council's customer service to request an assessment of the concerned vegetation to be informed of the likelihood of a request being approved.

What type of requests would not likely be approved?

- Where the proposed clearing may cause a hazard or risk to the environment or members of the public
- Clearing or removing vegetation / street trees assessed as "medium to high value"
- Clearing vegetation in an area other than the road verge adjoining the applicant's property i.e. parks, environmental reserves, dunal or foreshore areas.

Council wishes to maintain and enhance the regions natural assets, liveability and environmental credentials through preserving road verge amenity.

What if I think vegetation or a tree on council managed land is unsafe or requires maintenance?

Please notify council's customer service and the matter will be investigated by a council officer.

Street Trees

Council has a long term goal to establish a healthy and sustainable street tree network across the region. Council also facilitates the provision to plant a street tree/s as an offset to cleared vegetation where there is opportunity and residents or communities are supportive.



Adequate Tree Protection Zones (TPZ) must be established around existing trees near to the proposed works. TPZ considers both the crown and root area of a tree that requires protection for long-term viability.

The below figure provides an example of adequate tree protection zones to protect existing trees.

Figure 1: Adequate Tree Protection Zones



What is Dial Before You Dig?

Dial Before You Dig is a referral service for information on locating underground utilities anywhere in Australia. This information needs to satisfy that there are no utility services located within the proposed area of works that may become interfered with.

Why do I need public liability insurance?

For the activity 'Clearing Vegetation', public liability insurance is required.

Council is seeking to protect residents' interest should anything happen on council managed or controlled land where you intend to conduct activities. This will ensure that you, and anyone traversing the road verge is protected in the case of an accident or incident. Your home insurance company may provide public liability insurance.

How do I lodge my application?

Applications can be lodged at any council customer service centre or emailed online. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the documentation provided and suitability of the proposed works. A site visit may be conducted by an authorised council officer should it be deemed necessary.

In the event the application is unsuccessful you will not be required to pay the bond,

however the application fee will not be refunded.

Why is there a bond?

A bond is not payable until your application has been assessed and approved by an authorised officer, after which time you will be contacted in order to make the bond payment.

The bond is held until the permitted activities are complete. The purpose of the bond is to cover any damage to existing infrastructure or vegetation and varies in accordance with level of risk and activity type:

- \$255, \$510 or \$2,040 - Clearing Vegetation

The permit will not be issued until the relevant bond has been paid in full. The bond is refunded once the activity is complete, photos have been submitted of the completed works and council is satisfied that there has been no damage to existing vegetation or infrastructure, outside of what was permitted.

How do I 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