

## Road verge planting

# Guidelines for planting a self-assessable verge garden

Last updated August 2024

### Verge planting

**Sunshine Coast Council has developed self-assessable criteria to support residents wishing to enhance or beautify the road verge in front of their property.**

**Verge gardens could include native, edible or raingardens.**

The verge is the area of land between your property boundary and the road.

The traditional road verge within our region generally consists of grass, footpath and a council provided street tree.

The self-assessable criteria allow residents to utilise the verge for planting a garden, while also retaining access for pedestrians, underground utilities and trees.

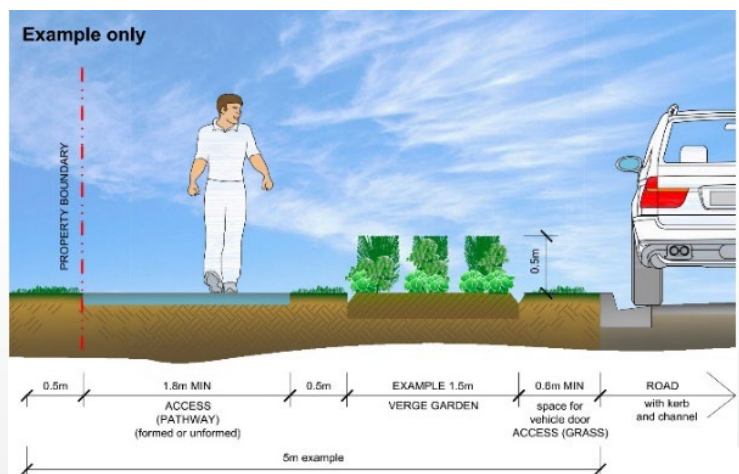
Creating a garden that meets this criteria does not require council approval.



### Planting options

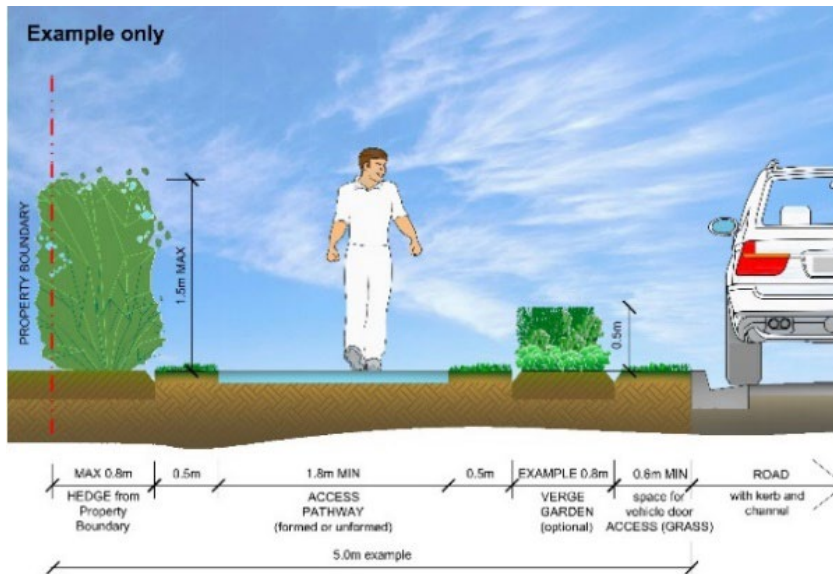
#### Garden beds

- Low growing gardens can be planted anywhere within the verge where appropriate access is maintained.
- Plants may be up to 50cm high at maturity.
- Gardens must be set back from the road edge by 60cm.
- Where there is no formed path on the verge, a minimum 1.8m width must be left clear for pedestrian access.
- Only bio-degradable mulches such as wood-chip, leaves and compost to be used. Mulch must be contained within the garden bed area ensuring that it does not become a slip or trip hazard to pedestrians or be placed in a way that it may enter waterways.



## Hedges

- Hedges planted against the property boundary can encroach out 80cm from boundary line.
- Can grow to 1.5m high at maturity.
- A 1m setback from the driveway is required to maintain sight lines.



## 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. If you wish to plant anything outside this list you will need to apply for a permit so council can work with you to determine the suitability of plant species.

## Can I start planting straight away?

Yes, you can start planting at any time as long as the garden meets the self-assessment criteria below.

Council encourages residents to Dial Before You Dig. This free service provides information on underground utilities to ensure there are no services located within your proposed garden that may be impacted. Visit [www.1100.com.au](http://www.1100.com.au) or phone 1100.

## Who is responsible for maintaining the garden?

You are required to undertake all maintenance, keep the garden well presented and in a safe condition and ensure that the vegetation adheres to the criteria at all times.

If at any time the vegetation poses a safety risk or doesn't meet the criteria, council may intervene.

## What these guidelines do not cover

- Street trees: if you would like a street tree please lodge a request via council's customer service centre.
- Properties located on roads with a speed limit exceeding 50 kilometres per hour (for safety reasons). If you live on a road that exceeds this speed limit, a verge garden permit application can be submitted for assessment.

### 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. If you choose to retain the garden, you must ensure it complies with the self-assessment criteria.

Alternatively, you can remove the garden and reinstate the verge to natural turf.

### What happens if I move?

If you are moving house, it would be appreciated for you to invite the next home owner to take care of the verge garden. If they do not wish to take care of it, please reinstate the verge to natural turf before you leave the property.

### What if a utility company needs access?

Where access to the road verge is required by a utility company, they will often cause damage to the surface area or surrounding infrastructure and usually re-establish this area with turf. They do not normally cover costs to reinstate additional beautification or infrastructure treatments.

### Are there alternative options?

Yes, if you would like to create a garden that does not fit within the criteria you can apply for a permit.

There are also a range of [community gardens](#) located across the Sunshine Coast.

### More information

For more information on related topics refer to councils website and associated fact sheets:

- [Verge permit for planting and infrastructure](#)
- [Community gardens](#)
- [Clearing vegetation on a road verge.](#)