

Eurobodalla Shire Council – Draft Verge Garden Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

Encouraging the community to get involved with creating verge gardens has wide ranging benefits. Verge gardens create greener spaces which improve our streets' amenity and access to outdoor recreation, provide significant social and health benefits through improved mental wellbeing, natural cooling through shading and sun protection, habitat for our local wildlife and they remove carbon from the atmosphere helping to reduce emissions. Verge gardens help to provide an overall better quality of life for people in the Eurobodalla.

The verge area is the Council owned land located between your property boundary and the adjacent road kerb. This area represents an opportunity to participate in urban greening and these guidelines have been developed to help you create a successful and safe verge garden.

These guidelines apply to verge gardens. All existing trees in the verge area are to remain and are protected.



DO I NEED COUNCIL APPROVAL TO PLANT THE VERGE?

No, if you follow these guidelines, you can create a verge garden that will meet council requirements by not impacting on the safety of the community, the environment and surrounding infrastructure. No approvals process is necessary.

Residents can only plant a verge garden in the verge area that aligns with your property. You cannot extend your verge garden to your neighbour's verge or property without their permission or onto other sections of public land including traffic islands and median strips.

If council receives a complaint about your verge garden or if it doesn't meet the guidelines, we'll work with you to ensure the garden is modified to comply.

GUIDELINES FOR CREATING YOUR VERGE GARDEN

To ensure your verge garden is a success, we have created some simple instructions.



Talk to your neighbours

Talk with your neighbours and fill them in on your plans for a verge garden.

Understanding your neighbours concerns and adjusting your plans before you commence your garden helps maintain a positive outlook for the greening of these spaces. Together you might come up with a bigger and better plan.

It's important to remember that the verge is a public space. If you plan on growing edible plants, pedestrians passing-by may harvest from your verge garden.



Have Fun – but stay safe

We encourage residents to have fun creating attractive landscapes that compliment homes and the surrounding streetscape.

When undertaking work however always consider your safety and the safety of others.

- Wear sturdy enclosed shoes, gloves, and remember sun protection.
- Never work from on the road itself when planting your verge garden
- Always allow for pedestrians to pass though the verge – even during construction



Ensure you maintain a safe access for pedestrians on your verge.

Pedestrians need to use the verge without being obstructed by gardens or forced to walk on the road.

If there is not a formal footpath, please leave a strip of grass at least 1.2 metres wide for pedestrian access.

Please refer to photos below



Ensure people can open car doors when parking in front of your verge garden.

If your verge doesn't have a formal footpath, your verge garden must have a 1.2 metre clearance from the edge of the kerb to ensure people can open their car door.



Leave enough room for the postie!

Leave enough space for the postie to access your letterbox – usually a 1 metre clearance around the letterbox is sufficient.



Check for services

The verge area often contains above and below-ground services including lighting, powerlines and poles, service access pits, water, sewerage, stormwater, gas, telephone, fire hydrants and optic fibre cables.

Always obtain a Dial Before you Dig report before you commence any digging or excavation work.



Dial before you dig is a free referral service to obtain information relating to underground infrastructure. Go to www.1100.com.au or call 1100 to obtain your **free** dial before you dig check for your verge.

It is also important to leave 1.2 metres access around power poles, fire hydrants and service pits that are located within your verge.

Please refer to photo below



In the event that damage is caused to public utility services due to verge gardening activities, you must report this immediately to the appropriate authority for repairs, the costs of which may be charged back to you.

INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES WITHIN THE VERGE

Utility service providers and / or Council may require upgrading and maintain their infrastructure within the verge, which may result in the excavation of part or all of your garden. In these instances, there is no obligation from the utility service providers or Council to reinstate a verge garden after the work is undertaken.

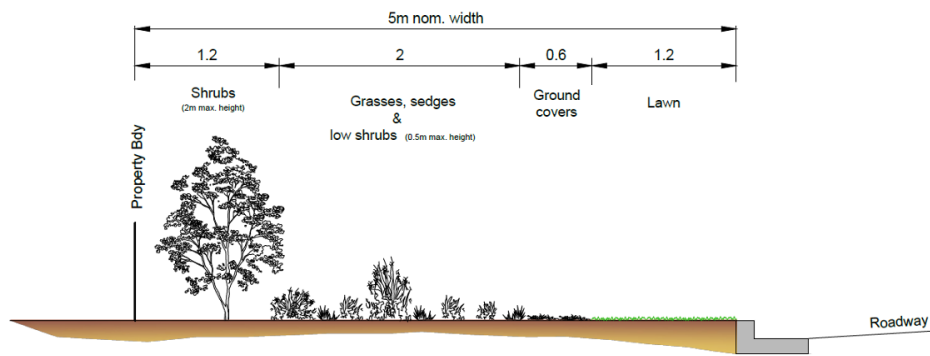


Maintain your verge garden for pedestrian and traffic safety

Ensure that your verge garden does not impact on lines of sight for traffic, including vehicles entering and exiting driveways.

We ask for this purpose that you follow the plant height restrictions as outlined in the Eurobodalla Verge Garden Design.

Example 1:



Eurobodalla Verge Garden Design

If adequate line of sight, pedestrian access and access to services is not maintained Council may ask residents to remove part of or modify the verge garden.

If you have recently moved into a new home with an established verge garden, it is your responsibility to ensure that the verge garden complies with these guidelines.



Do not install any structures or hard surfaces in your verge garden.

As the verge is public land, we need to ensure the area remains free of obstructions and nuisances to others.

For this reason the guideline recommends the use of plants and organic mulches only. We ask that residents do not install sculptures, seating, rocks or other items with hard surfaces where a member of the public could potentially injure themselves.

Garden edging with a 'lip' of no-more than 15 cm is acceptable to contain mulch and to stop it from entering the stormwater drain.

Organic mulching should be flush with the footpath or grass area. The use of non-organic materials such as loose gravel, crushed brick or other stone aggregate is not permitted. The use of any hard landscaping materials or irrigation systems is also not permitted.

The use of garden structures such as wood planter boxes is not supported by Council. Should residents use such materials, Council may ask for their removal.

WHAT TO PLANT

Residents are encouraged to get creative and plant verges to suit your own style, but you are only permitted to plant either Australian native or edible plants. Please avoid using plants with spikes and thorns. Be prepared to commit some time and effort and only plant what you know you can continue to maintain. By selecting native plants that are suited to the location they should be low maintenance, drought resistant and hardy. They will also provide food and habitat for our local wildlife.

It is also important to use mulch to retain moisture and to assist with controlling weeds.

If you don't know where to start, contact Council for an Environment Officer to meet with you at your property to assist with brainstorming ideas for plant selection.

EUROBODALLA REGIONAL BOTANIC GARDEN NATIVE NURSERY

The Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens Native Nursery offers a wide range of verge garden friendly ground covers, grasses, and shrubs that are native to the Eurobodalla area.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on how to create a verge garden please contact Council on 4474 1000 and one of the staff from the Environment Team will provide assistance.

Compliance process

If a verge garden is deemed to be no follow these guidelines, this will be the process for non-compliance (To complete with rangers).

SELF ASSESSMENT CHECK LIST

We encourage residents to use this checklist when preparing and maintaining your verge garden.

VERGE GARDEN CHECKLIST:	YES	NO
I have talked to my neighbours and considered their feedback on my verge garden proposal		
I have planned to ensure safe pedestrian access while I construct my verge garden		
The Verge Garden I have planned is in line with my property boundary, and does not encroach onto my neighbours verge		
I have ensured my verge will retain a pedestrian access 1200mm wide which is level and free from trip hazards		
My verge garden has been designed to ensure car doors can open with no plants within 1200mm of the edge of the kerb		
I have left clear access for the postal service		
I have left clear access around service pits, power poles and fire hydrants		
I have a safe and accessible place for my garbage bin collection		
I contacted dial before you dig on ph. 1100 or www.1100.com.au and had a free services check to confirm that there are no underground pipes or cables that will be impacted by the garden.		
I understand that my verge garden could be impacted by future infrastructure installations or repairs, and Council will not replace any plants lost.		
My garden will be maintained to a maximum height as outlined in the Verge Garden Design Plan to ensure line of sight for traffic and pedestrians		
My verge garden consists of plants and organic mulches only, I have not installed hard surface edging or materials		
The garden will be regularly maintained to ensure it remains safe, healthy, tidy and attractive		