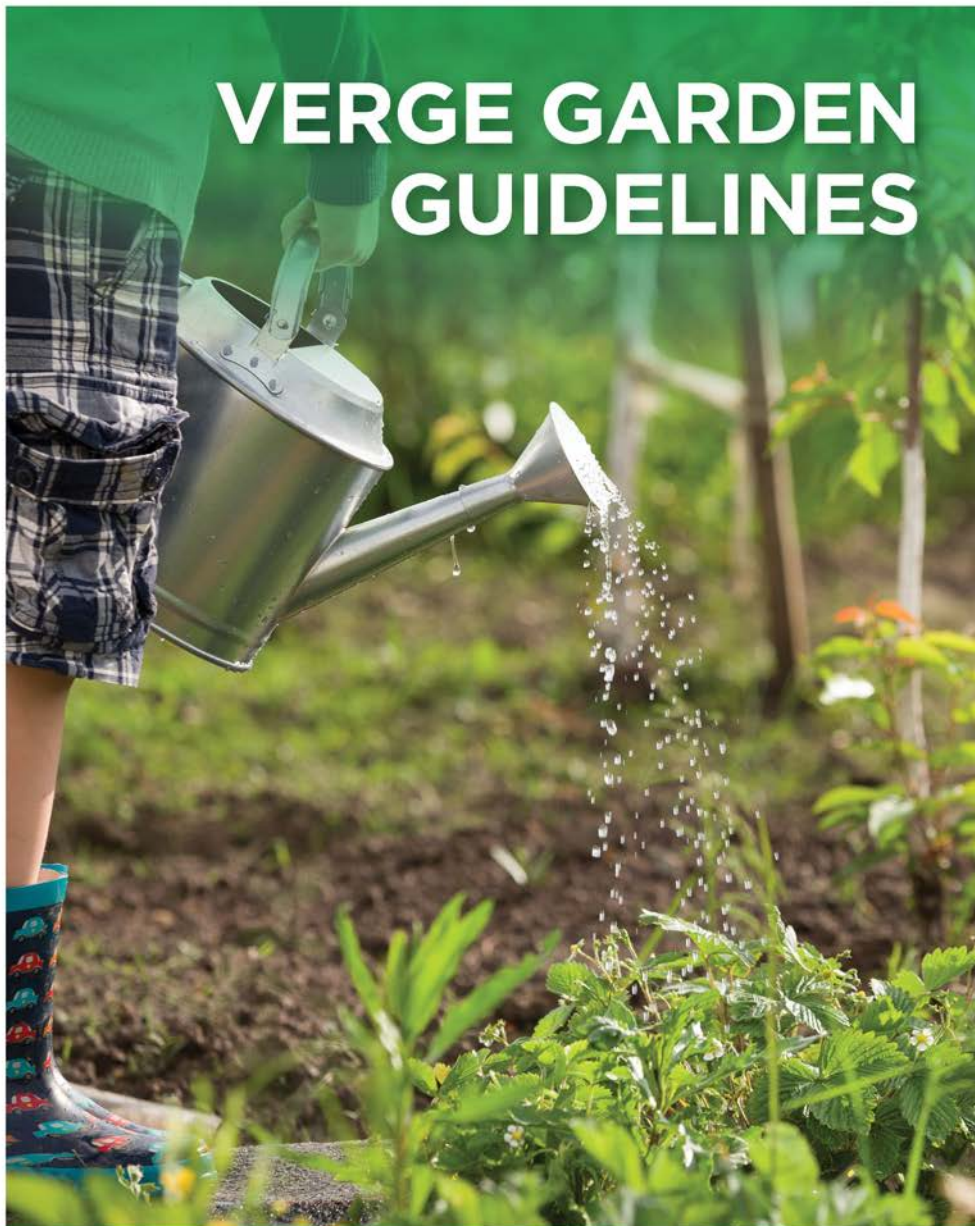


VERGE GARDEN GUIDELINES



Greening our public spaces



Introduction

The verge area in front of your home provides an opportunity for the community to join in greening our public spaces. We've developed these guidelines to help you create a safe and successful verge garden. The verge area is the Council owned land located between your property boundary and the adjacent road kerb.

Verge gardens are one part of implementing our Urban Greening Strategy and they are a great way to make a more beautiful Wollongong and build community spirit in our neighbourhoods.



Do I need Council approval to plant the Verge?

No, this guideline provides opportunity for residents to create a verge garden that will not impact on the safety of the community, the environment and surrounding infrastructure. No approvals process is necessary.

We have created an optional self-declaration form included in this guideline that you can complete and send into Council as a record that your garden complies with this guideline.

Council is often requested to investigate verge gardens and in these instances our preference is to work with affected residents to ensure these verge gardens are modified to ensure public safety.

In situations where a verge garden continues to create conflict with access and safety, Council may take action to fix the issue with an order, and penalties issued under the Local Government Act can apply.

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 property without their permission or onto other sections of public land including traffic islands and median strips.

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Guidelines for creating your Verge Garden

To ensure your verge garden is a success we have created some simple 'rules' within this guideline.



Talk to your neighbours

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



Have Fun - but stay safe

We encourage residents to create attractive landscapes that complement your homes and the surrounding streetscape and have fun while doing it.

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 maintain a safe access for pedestrians – even during construction



Ensure you maintain safe access for pedestrians on your verge.

It is important that pedestrians can use the verge without being obstructed by verge gardens or forced onto the road. If the verge in your street does not have a formal footpath, we encourage leaving a level grass strip which is free from trip hazards. This must be maintained to 1500mm in width.



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

Your verge garden must have a 600mm clearance from the edge of the kerb so people can open their car door. If you wish to plant this space only use low groundcovers.



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 enough.



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 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 get information relating to underground infrastructure. Go to www.1100.com.au or call **1100** to get your free dial before you dig check for your verge.

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

If 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 upgrade 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.

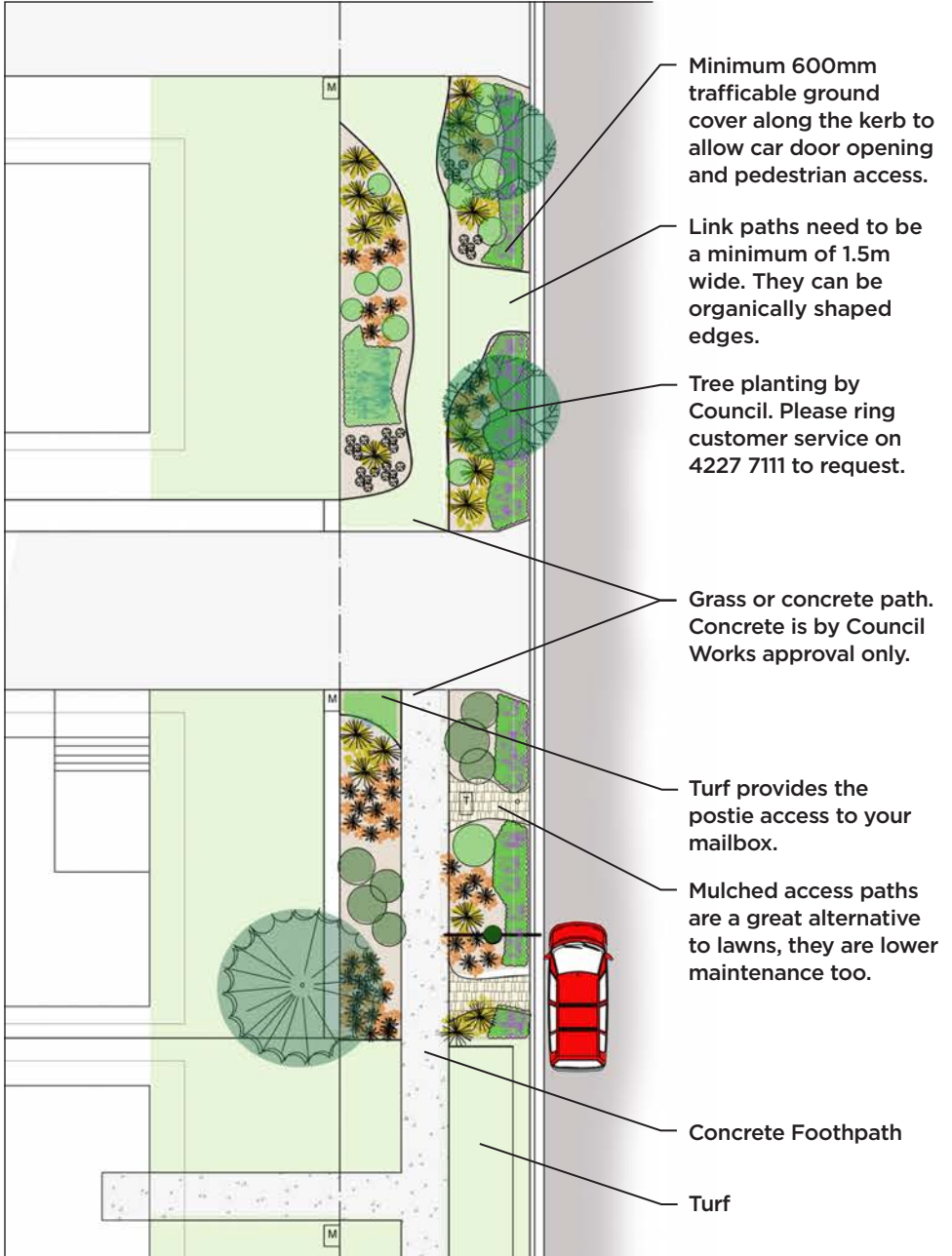
It is important to ensure that your verge garden does not impact on lines of sight for traffic, including vehicles entering and exiting driveways.

We ask that you choose plants that grow to a maximum 700mm in height, or you prune and maintain your plants to this height.

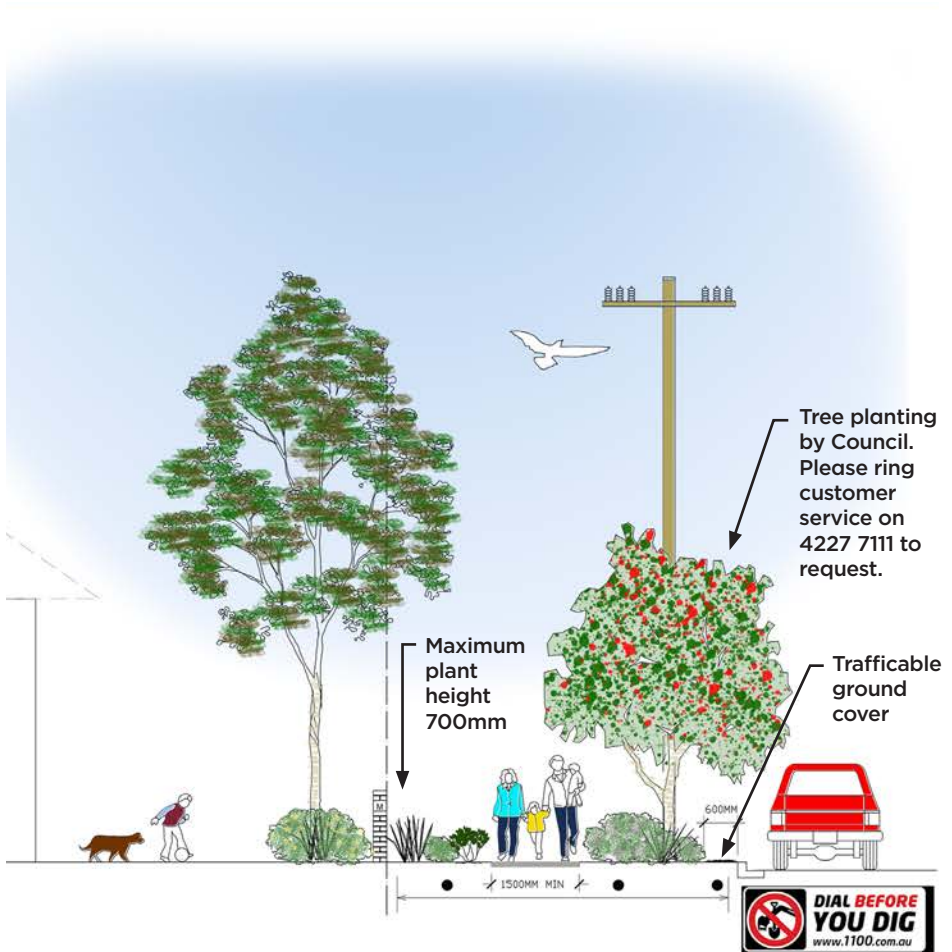
If adequate line of sight, pedestrian access and access to services is not maintained Council can intervene and ask residents to remove part of or maintain the verge garden.

If you have recently moved into a new home with an established verge garden, it is your responsibility to make sure the verge garden complies with these guidelines. You may choose to retain the garden or remove the garden and reinstate the verge back to turf.

Verge Garden Planting



Wollongong City Council reminds all residents that they should talk to neighbours and respect their wishes. Please limit planting to your verge and manage the boundaries in a respectful way.



Services corridor. e.g gas, electrical, water, NBN. Council require you to use this free service everytime you dig in the footpath for your safety.

Infrastructure Upgrades Within the Verge



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

As the verge is public land, the area needs to remain 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 edging, sculptures, compost bins, seating or other items with hard surfaces where a member of the public could potentially injure themselves.

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. If residents use these materials, Council may ask for their removal.



Don't plant trees in your verge – we will come and do it for you!

Council does not permit the planting of trees by residents on the verge.

If you would like a tree as part of your verge garden please contact us and we will send out one of our Arborists to select a tree suited to your verge, and this will be scheduled for planting as part of Council's Urban Greening Program.



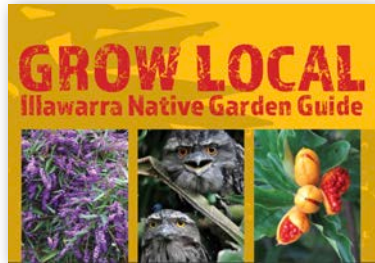
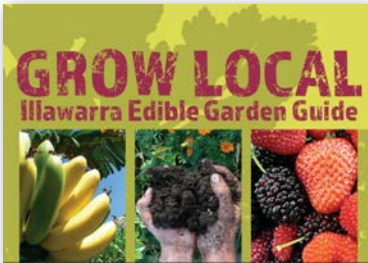
What to plant

Residents are encouraged to get creative and plant verges to suit your own taste, please however avoid using plants with spikes and thorns, and plants that can become weeds in the local environment.

Your local nursery can assist with appropriate plant selection, and recommend the use of local native plant species where possible.

If you don't know where to start, Council has resources to assist you with plant selection including our grow local garden guides. You'll find them on our website, or hard copies are available at the Wollongong Botanic Garden Administration Centre or Nursery. They provide information on local native plant species selection and edible species.

wollongong.nsw.gov.au/my-community/sustainable-living/sustainable-food/grow-local



Wollongong Botanic Garden Greenplan Nursery

Council's Greenplan Nursery, located at the Wollongong Botanic Garden offers a wide range of verge garden friendly ground covers, grasses, and shrubs that are native to the Wollongong area, as well as other Australian natives.

Our expert horticulturalists are on hand at each sale to help with advice about plant selection for your garden.

The Greenplan Nursery is open to the public on the third Friday of each month from 7.30am - 2.30pm, and is located at 65 Northfields Ave, Keiraville.

For further details head to the Botanic Garden website:

wollongong.nsw.gov.au/botanicgarden/events/greenplan-plant-sales



Wollongong City Council Demonstration Sites

To further help you with inspiration and demonstrate how the guidelines work in practice, we are creating verge garden demonstration sites at:

Coledale Community Centre

(Native verge garden)

747 Lawrence Hargrave Dr, Coledale 2515

Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre -

(Bushfoods verge garden)

49a Cawley St, Bellambi 2518

Corrimal Short Street Occasional Child Care Centre

(Mixed native and produce verge garden)

18 Short St, Corrimal 2518

Port Kembla Community Centre -

(Mixed produce verge garden)

191a Wentworth St, Port Kembla 2505

Kemblawarra Community Hall -

(Bushfoods verge garden)

Cowper St, Warrawong 2502

Other Useful Web Resources

Growing Illawarra Natives

Developed by passionate community experts this website has great information on local native plant species including those suited to verge plantings.

growingillawarranatives.org

The Australian Native Plant Society has a wealth of information on its website on Australian Native Plants.

www.anpsa.org.au

NSW WeedWise provides information on weeds and weed risk species.

weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au

For further information

For further information on how to create a verge garden please contact Council on **4227 7111** and one of our Parks + Open Space staff will provide over the phone advice.



Coledale Community Centre Native Verge Garden



Port Kembla Community Centre Mixed Produce Verge Garden

Self Assessment and Optional Declaration

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

There is also an optional declaration you can complete and send to Council, which we will keep as a record of your verge garden complying with this guideline, should Council be asked at a later point in time to investigate.

Please email this declaration to **council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au**

Name: (optional) _____

Address: (optional) _____

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 1500mm wide which is level and free from trip hazards		
My verge garden has been designed to ensure car doors can open with no plants or low groundcovers only within 600mm of the edge of the kerb		
I have left clear access for the postal service		
I have left clear access around service pits, and power poles		
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 700mm height 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.		
If I want to install a tree I will contact Council to request an Arborist visit my verge to assess the site specific constraints.		

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____





Notes

Make a more beautiful Wollongong

