

## Verge permit for planting and infrastructure

**There are occasions when council will approve a permit for residents for planting (which does not meet self-assessable guidelines) and/or install infrastructure within the road verge.**

The road verge, also known as the nature strip or road reserve, within our region generally consists of grass, footpath and a council provided street tree.

**To apply for planting (which does not meet self-assessable guidelines) and/or infrastructure, you must complete the permit application form 'Road Verge Activities on Council Land – Verge Planting / Infrastructure Application.'**

### Planting

A permit application is required where planting does not meet the self assessable guidelines.

An application must be submitted and approved prior to any planting being undertaken.

All planting must meet the below criteria when applying for a permit to plant vegetation within the road verge that does not meet the self-assessable guidelines.

If the application is approved, the permit holder must maintain, at all times during the approval, a Certificate of Currency (Public Liability Insurance) minimum of **\$2 million** (\$2,000,000) covering the area occupied by the planting.

Applications are assessed on a case by case basis. A bond may also be applicable depending on the extent of the works and will be quoted on assessment of the application.

### Infrastructure

A permit application is required if you wish to place any infrastructure on the road verge. An application must be applied for, and approved, prior to any installation of

infrastructure such as a shelter, fence or retaining wall within the road verge.

If the application is approved, the permit holder must maintain, at all times during the approval, a Certificate of Currency (Public Liability Insurance) minimum of **\$20 million** (\$20,000,000) covering the area occupied by the infrastructure.

A bond may also be applicable depending the extent of the works and will be quoted on assessment of the application. A bond is not payable until your application has been approved.

Each permit application is assessed on a case-by-case basis. A non-refundable application fee applies and must be paid on lodgement of the application.

If the application is approved, a signed Deed of Consent may be required (more information below).

Depending on the type of infrastructure, you may require the service of a registered Building Certifier to gain a current Building Development Permit for the proposed building works. Please check with a private certifier.

### Why is a permit required?

A permit is required so council can assess the circumstances and ensure community safety is upheld and the road verge function is not compromised.

Services such as water, sewerage, power and telecommunications may be located within the road verge 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.

Certain activities conducted on the road verge 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.*

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.

### **Public liability insurance**

Public liability insurance is required to protect the 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.

### **Bond**

The purpose of the bond (if required) is to cover any damage to existing infrastructure or vegetation and varies in accordance with level of risk and activity type.

The installation of the planting or infrastructure cannot commence until payment of the bond is received. 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.

### **Deed of Consent**

The purpose of the Deed of Consent (if required) is to ensure works are conducted in a way that satisfies all stakeholders' needs and to minimise any damage to existing infrastructure or vegetation. The Deed of Consent replaces the requirement to pay a bond for proposed works.

### **Can I remove existing street trees to install infrastructure?**

Installing or altering infrastructure on council controlled land should in no way impact on existing street trees.

Adequate Tree Protection Zones (TPZ) must be established around existing trees. Tree

Protection Zones consider both the crown and root area of a tree that requires protection for long-term viability.

### **Dial Before You Dig**

This free service provides information on underground utilities to ensure there are no services located within your road verge that may be impacted. Visit [www.1100.com.au](http://www.1100.com.au) or phone 1100.

### **How do I lodge my application?**

Applications can be lodged at council's customer service centres or via council's website.

A non-refundable application assessment fee may need to be paid on lodgement of your application. Please check the application form for applicable fees.

Applications will be assessed in accordance with the documentation provided and suitability of the proposed works.

If necessary, a site visit may be conducted by an authorised council officer.

### **Can the permit be transferred?**

A permit cannot be transferred, sublet or mortgaged. Any new property owner / business will be required to apply to council for an approval on new or existing planting or infrastructure.

### **More information**

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

- [Plant a self-assessable verge garden](#)
- [Community gardens](#)
- [Clearing vegetation on a road verge](#)

Alternatively contact council's [customer service centre](#).

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**Sunshine Coast Council**

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## Criteria for planting and/or installation of infrastructure on road verge (outside self-assessable guidelines)

### 8. Criteria – All planting and/or infrastructure must meet the below criteria when applying for a permit to install vegetation and/or infrastructure on council land.

<input type="checkbox"/> Has a minimum 1m from both sides of a driveway left clear of vegetation and/or infrastructure for sight lines
<input type="checkbox"/> The plantings compliment the normal use of footpaths for pedestrians and cyclists
<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
<input type="checkbox"/> Where there is no existing formed path within the immediate nature strip, 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 of at least 500mm to prevent mature growth from encroaching over pathway. <i>The spread of the plant should be considered when selecting species.</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Has a 1m set back from the base of powerpoles or other utilities to maintain clear access
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain view sight lines, for pedestrian, bicycle or vehicular traffic when using the road especially at intersections and entering or exiting a driveway, and to maintain vistas from any premise
<input type="checkbox"/> The vegetation and/or infrastructure is planted between road edge and property boundary only (e.g. not within a median strip)
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a vegetation and/or infrastructure clear zone within existing drainage (e.g. is not planted across road side swales, table drains or bio retention devices)
<input type="checkbox"/> The vegetation and/or infrastructure does not present a hazard or risk to the environment or members of the public
<input type="checkbox"/> The garden does not include species that have thorns, spikes, caustic sap or are considered poisonous and the impact of allergies within the community has been considered
<input type="checkbox"/> The garden does not include artificial turf
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilises only bio-degradable materials
<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 conflict with under or above ground services (refer to Dial Before You Dig online service to check the location of proposed works)
<input type="checkbox"/> Vegetation and produce can be shared with the community at no cost (i.e. will not be used for commercial or exclusive 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, e.g. no tools left on site and no pesticides, herbicides or fungicides used
<input type="checkbox"/> Any other conditions advised by councils stakeholders