



# NATURE STRIP GUIDELINES

OCTOBER 2023



Clarence... a brighter place



**CLARENCE CITY COUNCIL**

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## PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Clarence City Council (“council”) has developed these Nature Strip Guidelines to:

- assist in the interpretation of council’s policies and requirements surrounding Nature Strips;
- assist property owners in understanding the various maintenance responsibilities of Nature Strips; and
- outline what best practice maintenance for Nature Strips looks like.

These Guidelines represent council’s current position regarding Nature Strips and are subject to an update of council’s policy or position at any time.

Nature Strips are a valuable asset along council’s road network. They provide a corridor for various overhead and underground services, enriched visual amenity, space for water sensitive urban design features, street trees, footpaths and other public amenities.

Clarence has a wide variety of Nature Strips where landscaping is unique and creative. Council is generally supportive of the altered landscaping of Nature Strips and has produced these guidelines to provide understanding on how these areas can be developed, without creating a hazard to service providers or the general public.

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**Council does not maintain Nature Strips in urban areas, it is the responsibility of the adjacent Property Owner. The maintenance of rural road verges by council is limited to annual slashing.**

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These guidelines refer to Nature Strips in both urban and rural areas although they are more relevant for urban areas.



*Council tree on Nature Strip*

## DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to these guidelines:

### **Nature Strip/s**

means the areas of land between the road pavement and the adjacent boundary of a property that has frontage adjoining any highway.

Under this definition, highway means any road.

Examples of typical Nature Strips are outlined on pages 5-7.

### **Maintainable Area**

means the area within a Nature Strip that is maintainable by the adjacent Property Owner.

### **Property Owner**

means the person ultimately responsible for the maintenance of a Nature Strip as the owner of the adjacent property, regardless of whether this responsibility is transferred to another party (e.g. rental agreement).

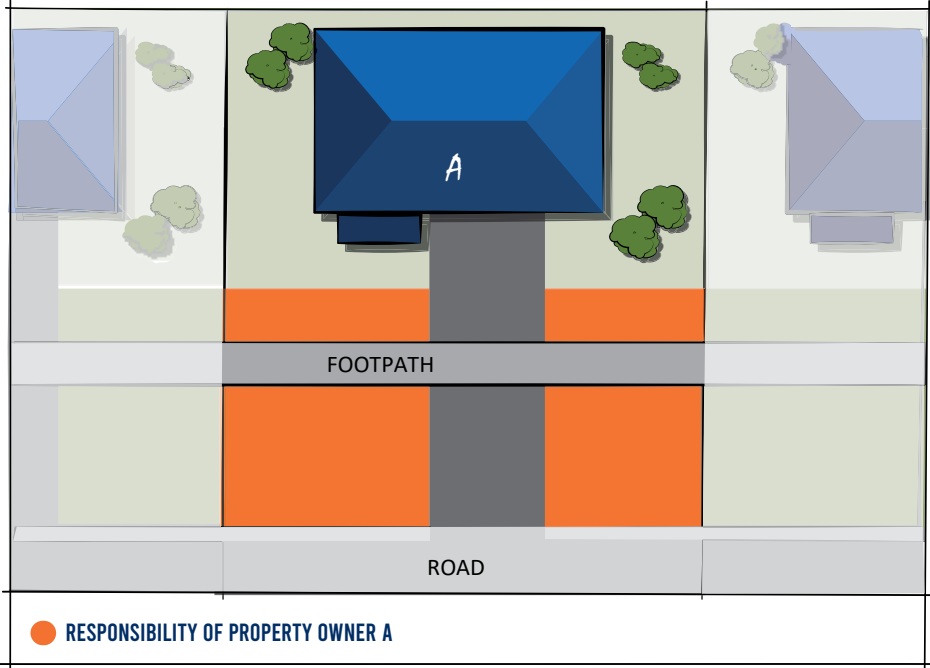
Council will issue all notices regarding Nature Strip maintenance to the Property Owner.



*Grass Nature Strip*

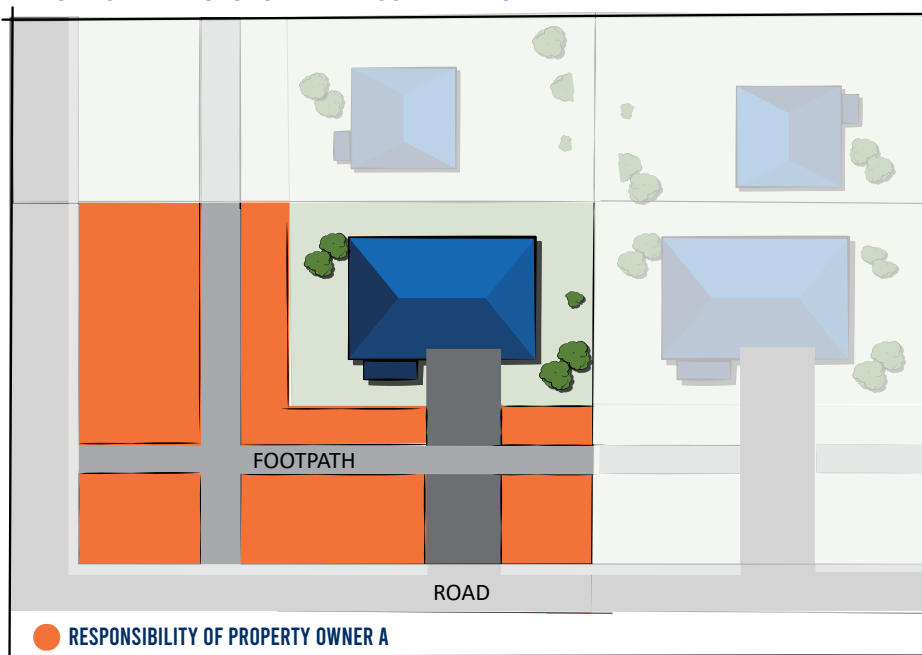
## COMMON EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL NATURE STRIPS

### NATURE STRIP RESPONSIBILITY - STANDARD



*Nature Strip Example 1*

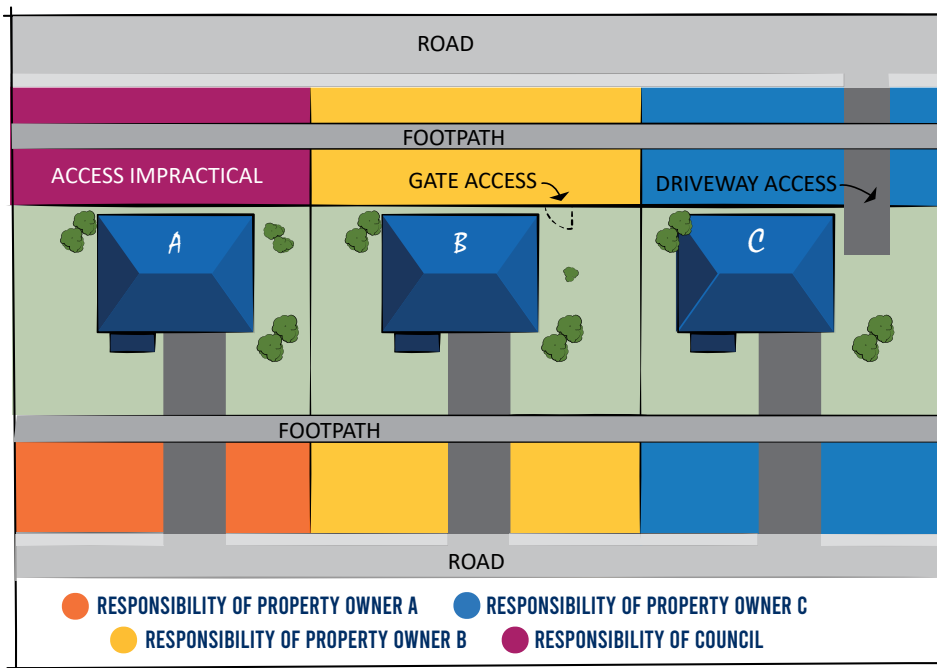
### NATURE STRIP RESPONSIBILITY - CORNER PROPERTY



*Nature Strip Example 2*

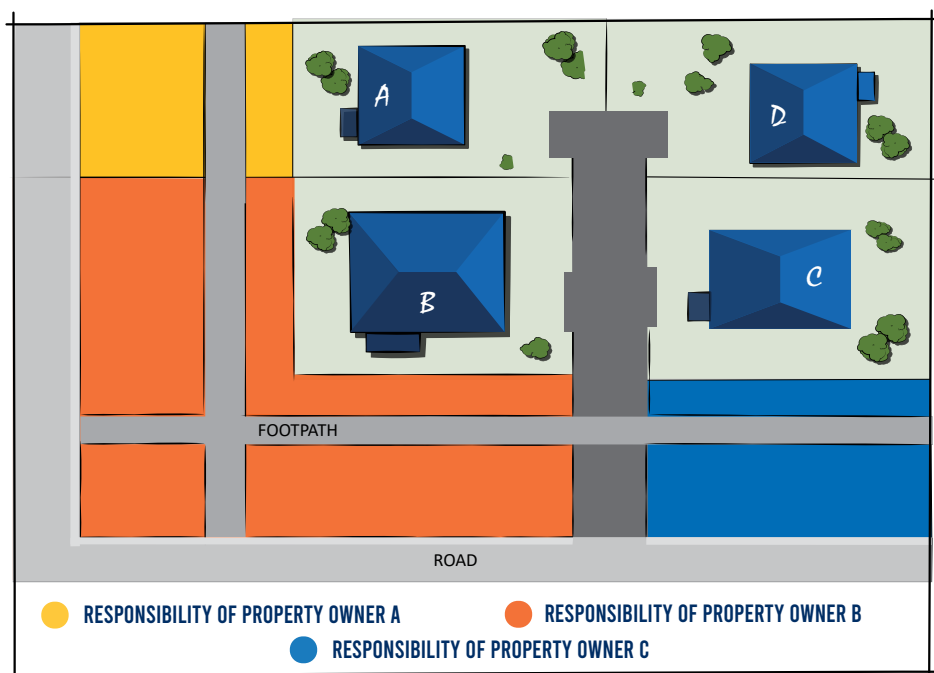
## COMMON EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL NATURE STRIPS (CONT.)

NATURE STRIP RESPONSIBILITY - Dual access



Nature Strip Example 3

NATURE STRIP RESPONSIBILITY - shared driveway



Nature Strip Example 4

## COMMON EXAMPLES OF TYPICAL NATURE STRIPS (CONT.)

### NATURE STRIP EXAMPLE 1

Most urban properties will have a well-defined Nature Strip between the road and the adjacent property boundary, often containing a footpath.

### NATURE STRIP EXAMPLE 2

If a property is on the corner of multiple roads, it will typically have a Nature Strip on each adjacent road boundary, regardless of the location of the property access.

### NATURE STRIP EXAMPLE 3

If a property is adjacent to two roads but is not on a corner, it will typically have a Nature Strip on each adjacent road boundary. In this instance, both Nature Strips are considered the adjacent Property Owner's responsibility

to maintain. If a property does not have access from one side, and access for maintenance purposes is impractical, council may include it in a suitable grass maintenance program.

To apply for this service, the resident should complete and submit a copy of the [Application for Mowing of a Nature Strip](#) form to council.

### NATURE STRIP EXAMPLE 4

When multiple properties share a driveway, council considers the Maintainable Area of the Nature Strip the responsibility of the directly adjacent property. A Property Owner may choose to discuss maintenance of the Nature Strip with their body corporate and/or other Property Owners to make alternative arrangements.



*Corner Nature Strip*

## ONGOING MAINTENANCE

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROPERTY OWNER IN URBAN AREAS

Council will maintain established trees and coordinate the removal of declared weeds on Nature Strips. All other works within the Maintainable Area are considered the responsibility of the adjacent Property Owner.

In an urban area the Property Owner is responsible for:

- all vegetation (excluding trees and declared weeds) on their Nature Strip, regardless of whether or not they planted it;
- mowing, weeding, trimming of edges and picking up litter;

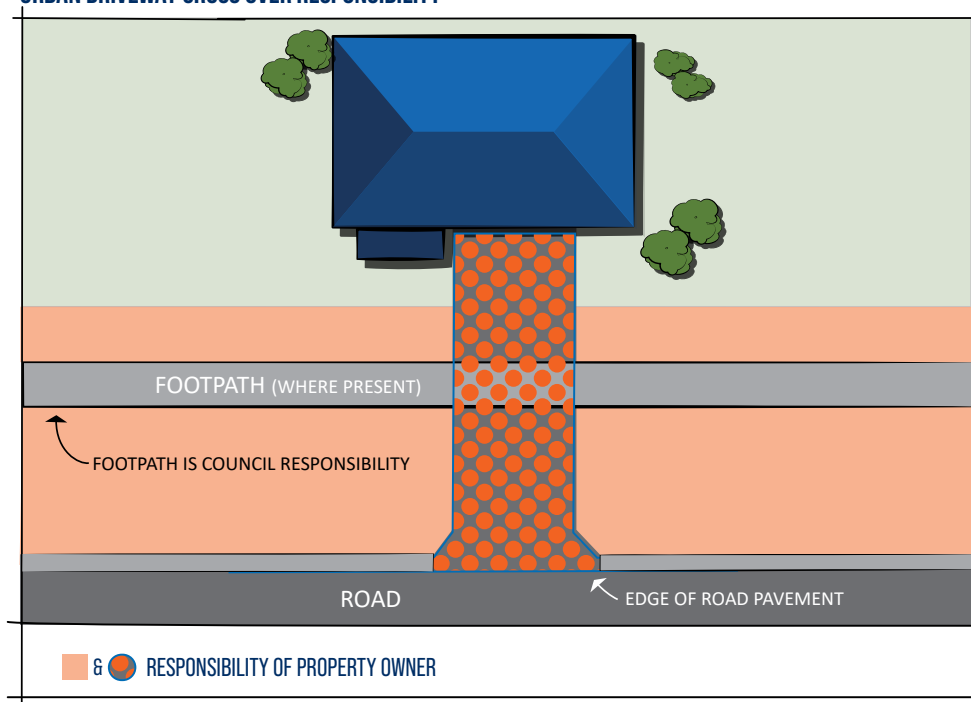
- ensuring the entire width of any footpath remains accessible by removing overhanging or encroaching vegetation;
- maintaining clear lines of sight for neighbouring driveways, intersections and footpaths, particularly where there is a slope or corner; and
- the driveway crossover, as depicted below.

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**Council is supportive of Property Owners altering the landscaping of their adjacent Nature Strips, provided the landscaping is in line with the section 'Suitable Nature Strip Landscaping' on page 11.**

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URBAN DRIVEWAY CROSS OVER RESPONSIBILITY



## ONGOING MAINTENANCE (CONT.)

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROPERTY OWNER IN RURAL AREAS

Generally, a rural road verge will have multiple of the following characteristics that distinguish it from an urban Nature Strip:

- the speed limit of the road is greater than 60km/h;
- the road verge is large in size;
- there may be an open drain instead of kerb and gutter; and
- there may be a gravel walking track instead of a concrete/bitumen footpath.

Council will:

- annually mow rural road verges to reduce sight hazards or public obstruction;

- maintain the open drains as required, including removal of vegetation; and
- keep track corridors clear.

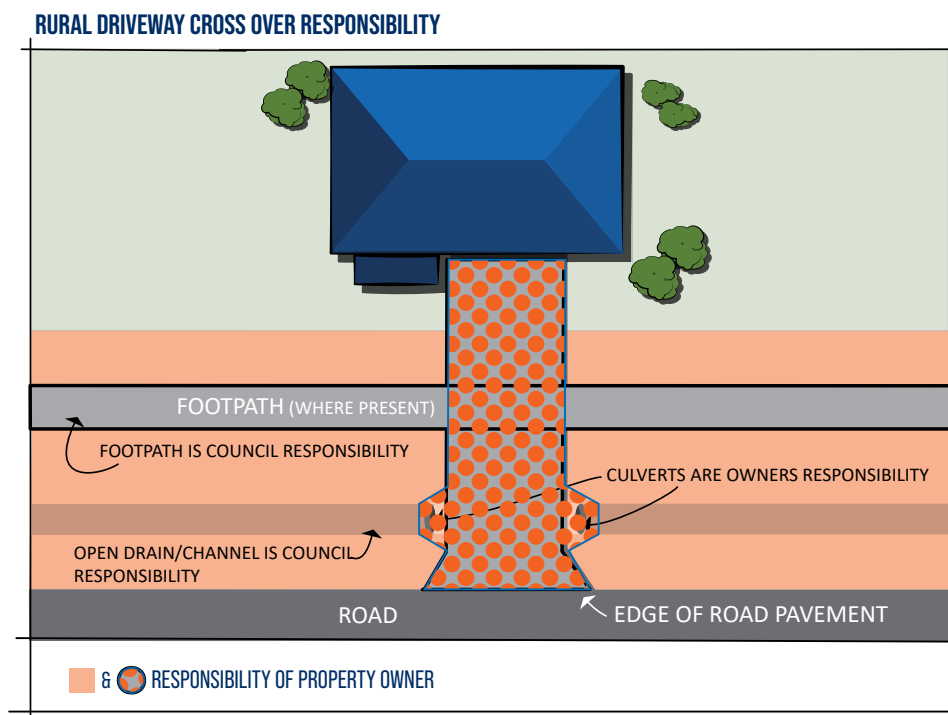
In a rural area, the Property Owner is responsible for:

- the driveway crossover; and
- any culvert or stormwater infrastructure with the sole purpose of moving water past the driveway such as that depicted below.

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**Council is generally supportive of Property Owners altering the landscaping of rural road verges, however, there are many additional factors to consider. Any plans for landscaping of rural road verges should be discussed with council prior to undertaking works.**

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## ONGOING MAINTENANCE (CONT.)

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF OTHER BODIES

Nature Strips in new subdivisions are the responsibility of the developer to establish to a maintainable standard and become the Property Owner's responsibility upon the transfer of titles.

Public infrastructure on a Nature Strip is the responsibility of the infrastructure owner, however the Property Owner must ensure access to the infrastructure is kept free of vegetation and other obstructions.

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#### INFRASTRUCTURE OWNERS

- **Power or light poles, signal boxes – TasNetworks**
  - **Bus stop shelters – Metro**
  - **Public bins, footpaths, trees, signage, stormwater – Council**
  - **Service/pit covers – check the lid for an indication of owner.**
- 

Council and utility authorities completing works within the Nature Strip will return it to a maintainable condition. They are not required to reinstate nature strips with landscape materials and plants other than grass seed. No compensation will be provided by council should any works have a negative impact on Nature Strip landscaping.

TasNetworks are responsible for power line clearance of all Nature Strip trees. Refer to the TasNetworks website for more information.

Council will investigate requests for other maintenance of street trees and will coordinate removal of declared weeds on Nature Strips when issues are reported.

Please report any issues, hazards, obstructions or concerns to council via email [clarence@ccc.tas.gov.au](mailto:clarence@ccc.tas.gov.au), website ([www.ccc.tas.gov.au](http://www.ccc.tas.gov.au)) or phone 03 6217 9500.

### MAINTENANCE ASSISTANCE

Where an elderly or incapacitated resident is unable to maintain their urban Nature Strip, they may apply to access councils twice-yearly mowing program. Please note that the maintenance is restricted to hand mowing only and cannot be completed on excessively steep or uneven Nature Strips.

To apply for this service, residents should complete and submit a copy of the [Application for Mowing of a Nature Strip](#) form to council.



*Nature Strip suitable for maintenance assistance*

## SUITABLE NATURE STRIP LANDSCAPING

Clarence has a variety of nature strips from 'standard' lawn and other low-level treatments through to diverse landscaped native gardens. It is important that Nature Strip landscaping does not create hazards for users of public space such as vehicles on the road, and pedestrians on the footpath. Any landscaping must ensure adequate clearance, accessibility and visibility is maintained.

Council is supportive of most Nature Strip landscaping and has provided considerations below for designing and maintaining different options.

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**Before undertaking any ground disturbance works, a free Before you Dig Australia (BYDA) assessment MUST be undertaken.**

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Should Property Owners choose to develop their Nature Strip, council will not contribute to the cost of establishment, ongoing maintenance, the replacement of landscaping, or any financial penalties incurred from damage to services. This responsibility remains with the Property Owner, even upon a change of ownership.

### LOW LEVEL NATURE STRIPS

- if you prefer a low-level Nature Strip, council's preference is a lawn treatment.
- non-lawn alternatives such as mulch or gravel are acceptable, provided they are appropriately contained to the Nature Strip.

- large rocks are not typically supported, and if shown to create a hazard, council may require their removal.
- artificial grass, concrete, decking, or other built surfaces are not permitted unless approved by council's Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

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**If your Nature Strip is within 20m of an intersection or bus stop, low level Nature Strip options are required. If you wish to undertake other planting, please contact council to discuss appropriate considerations.**

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*Low level Nature Strip with clearance around infrastructure*

## SUITABLE NATURE STRIP LANDSCAPING (CONT.)

### VEGETATION (UNDER 1m IN HEIGHT)

Council prefers the use of native vegetation planted on Nature Strips as it enhances biodiversity and provides habitat for local fauna.

There is a list of native species suitable for planting on a Nature Strip in Appendix A.

Council does not support plants that are excessively prickly or spiky, or environmental weeds listed in the Clarence Weed Strategy 2016 – 2030.

Common Nature Strip plants that are environmental weeds and not permitted include:

- gazania (*Gazania linearis* and other *species*);
- agapanthus (*Agapanthus praecox subspecies orientalis*);
- trailing daisy (*Osteospermum fruticosum*);
- bluebell creeper (*Billiardiera heterophylla*);
- fountain grass species (*Pennisetum species*);
- century plant/agave (*Agave americana* and other *species*).

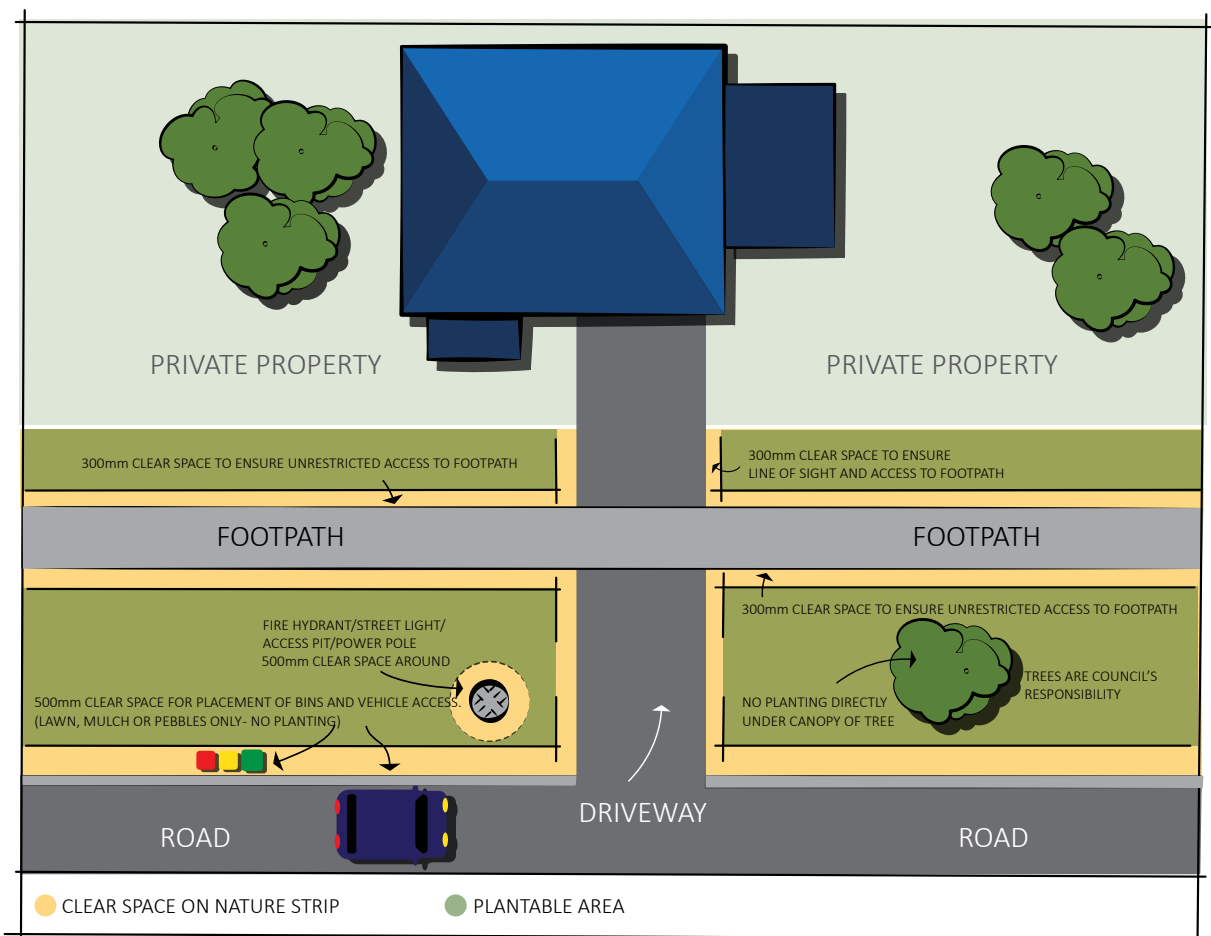


Diagram showing plantable area on a Nature Strip

## SUITABLE NATURE STRIP LANDSCAPING (CONT.)

When planting vegetation, it should be planted in a way that at mature size it remains a minimum of:

- 500mm from the kerb (to allow for waste bins and vehicle access);
- 300mm from the side of a driveway or edge of a footpath;
- 500mm on all sides of other infrastructure such as streetlights, fire hydrants, power poles, service pits; and
- not planted directly underneath the canopy of a tree.

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**Please note that the distances are suggestions that should prevent any hazards or obstructions, however, may not work in all situations. At a minimum, vegetation must be kept flush with the edge of a footpath or road and must not obstruct any line of sight.**

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### HEDGES (INCLUDING ABOVE 1m IN HEIGHT)

- hedges can be a great option for privacy, although if unmaintained can grow into large trees. Council is accepting of the planting of hedges provided they are regularly hedged.
- as hedges usually replace the need for a fence they should ideally be planted as close to the property boundary as is reasonable.
- like other vegetation, hedges must not impact the line of sight for a driveway or intersection.
- there is a list of suitable species for hedging in Appendix A.

- council is not supportive of hedges that are environmental weeds listed in the Clarence Weed Strategy 2016 – 2030.
- common Nature Strip hedges that are environmental weeds and not permitted include:
  - ◇ sweet pittosporum (*Pittosporum undulatum*);
  - ◇ cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster species*);
  - ◇ hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).

### PRIVATE VEGETATION

Council has no jurisdiction over vegetation on private property unless it is causing an obstruction to the public in line with section 39 of the *Local Government (Highways) Act 1982*.

- to prevent private vegetation from becoming an obstruction, any vegetation should be cut back to the following:
  - ◇ flush with the edge of a footpath or road; and
  - ◇ 2.5m canopy clearance for trees over footpaths and 4.5m over roads.
- when instances of obstruction from private property are brought to council's attention, council may write to the Property Owner requiring attendance to the issue/s. If the works required are not completed by the given/agreed date, council may undertake the works and invoice the Property Owner for costs incurred.

## DO I NEED COUNCIL PERMISSION?

If landscaping works include excavation or may impact traffic in any way, you must complete and submit an Application for a Permit to Undertake Works in or Affecting a Highway.

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**Before undertaking any ground disturbance works, a free Before you Dig Australia (BYDA) assessment MUST be undertaken.**

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### WORKS PERMITTED WITHOUT APPROVAL

- lawns.
- low-level treatments such as loose rock or pebble if appropriately retained. Edging (if used) must be flush with surrounding finish levels and allow for waste bins and vehicle access.
- vegetation under 1m (as per figure on page 12).
- hedges that are appropriately maintained and do not impede line of sight.
- temporary stringline/flag fencing for the purpose of grass rehabilitation or similar – provided it does not obstruct a footpath or create a hazard to pedestrians and is not in place for a period longer than 13 weeks.

### WORKS REQUIRING ASSESSMENT AND APPROVAL BY COUNCIL

- retaining structure other than edging.
- temporary construction fencing.
- built surfaces (e.g. pavers, concrete).
- new trees.
- permanent structures or footings (e.g.

concrete foundations, letter box footing, bin holding infrastructure, street library).

### WORKS/ACTIVITIES NOT PERMITTED

- artificial grass.
- garden furniture (e.g. benches, tables, bird baths).
- permanent fencing.
- drainage works other than by council or other authorised body.
- selling or promoting the sale of a vehicle or trailer.
- provision for parking of any vehicle or trailer.
- food trucks or any commercial business.
- charging cords or ports for electric vehicles or for charging electrical equipment.



*Vegetation pruned to provide pedestrian clearance*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Who is responsible for the maintenance of the Nature Strip outside my house?**

See section “Ongoing Maintenance” on page 8.

### **What are the boundaries of my Nature Strip?**

See section “Common Examples of Typical Nature Strips” on pages 5 to 6.

### **What should I do if there is an issue with infrastructure on my Nature Strip?**

See section “Responsibilities of Other Bodies” on page 10.

### **How do I request maintenance or removal of a street tree?**

Council owns and maintains all trees on nature strips in accordance with our Trees on Council Owned or Managed Land Policy 2021.

If there is an issue with a Nature Strip tree (e.g. obstruction or safety concern) please report the concern to council via email [clarence@ccc.tas.gov.au](mailto:clarence@ccc.tas.gov.au) or phone 03 6217 9500.

Please note that trees will not be removed because they obstruct views, advertising or signage, are disliked, produce leaf and bark litter, cause minor allergic or irritant responses, or block solar access, utilities or public infrastructure.

To request removal of a street tree you will need to complete and submit an Application for Felling or Lopping of Trees on Council Owned or Managed Land.

### **Can I park on a Nature Strip?**

Council discourages parking on a nature strip as it blocks services, compacts soil, and can create safety hazards.

### **Do I need a permit to maintain/do work in my Nature Strip?**

See section “Do I need Council Permission” on page 14.

### **How do I request a new street tree?**

To request a new street tree, please contact council to discuss suitability and the process of establishing a new tree.



*Street trees on Nature Strip*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONT.)

### **Can I put a skip bin on my Nature Strip?**

If there is not enough space for you to keep a skip bin on your own property you can complete and submit an Application for Structures and Obstructions on Council Land Permit to request to keep the bin temporarily on your Nature Strip.

### **Who is responsible for weeds that grow on the footpath?**

The Property Owner adjacent to the footpath is responsible for ensuring their Nature Strip does not encroach on the footpath, including grass and weeds.

Council operates a footpath spraying program across the city annually. This program targets the undesirable vegetation growing through footpaths. Council will additionally complete specific spot spraying as required if a hazard is present.

### **Who is responsible for removing leaf litter in the gutter?**

Council operates a street sweeper that runs on an approximate 10-week cycle. Deliberately depositing waste material into the gutter must be avoided as it may be many weeks until the street sweeper returns to the area and the material will likely enter the stormwater system.

### **What if I don't want chemicals sprayed near my property?**

You can opt to join the No Spray Register and take on the responsibilities usually covered by council's spraying. Fill in the application on council's website to join. Applications are open from 1 June to 30 June annually.



*Garden bed on Nature Strip*

## APPENDIX A: SUGGESTED PLANT SPECIES

The following species are suggested as potentially suitable plantings for Nature Strips within the council area. It is by no means an exhaustive list and is included to provide a basic starting point.

### LAWN

Spread seed over a 100mm topsoil layer using a commercially available lawn seed mix that is drought tolerant and recommended for use in Tasmania.

### GRAVEL/MULCH

Gravel or mulch is permitted provided it is appropriately retained within the Nature Strip. Edging (if used) must be flush with surrounding finish levels (i.e. footpath/kerb/driveway crossover). Care must be taken to avoid causing damage to any street tree roots during installation works and a minimum 500mm clearance must be maintained from any street tree trunk.



Appropriately retained gravel on a Nature Strip

### SHORT (UNDER 1m IN HEIGHT) VEGETATION SPECIES

- *Acrotriche serrulate* – ants delight
- *Aotus ericoides* – golden pea
- *Astroloma humifusum* – native cranberry
- *Austrostipa species* – spear grasses



silver banksia

- *Banksia marginata* – silver banksia (prostrate form)
- *Bauera rubioides* – wiry bauera (prostrate form)

- *Bossiaea cinerea* – showy bossiaea
- *Brachyscome angustifolia* – narrowleaf daisy



pigface

- *Bulbine bulbosa* – bulbine lily
- *Carpobrotus rossii* – pigface
- *Chrysocephalum apiculatum* – yellow buttons

- *Coronidium scorpioides* – button everlasting

- *Correa alba* – white correa (prostrate form)



white correa

- *Correa reflexa* – common correa (prostrate form)
- *Craspedia glauca* – billy buttons

- *Deyeuxia monticola* – bent grass

- *Dianella brevicaulis* – shortstem flaxlily
- *Dianella revoluta* – spreading flaxlily
- *Dianella tasmanica* – forest flaxlily
- *Dichondra repens* – kidney weed
- *Disphyma crassifolium subspecies clavellatum* – roundleaf pigface
- *Diplarrena moraea* – white iris
- *Euryomyrtus ramosissima* – rosy baeckea

## APPENDIX A: SUGGESTED PLANT SPECIES (CONT.)



knobby club-rush

- *Ficinia nodosa* – knobby club-rush
- *Goodenia ovata* – hop native-primrose (prostrate form)
- *Hibbertia procumbens* – spreading guinea-flower
- *Hibbertia riparia* – erect guinea-flower
- *Kennedia prostrata* – running postman
- *Leptospermum lanigerum* – woolly teatree (prostrate form)
- *Leptospermum scoparium* var. *scoparium* – common teatree (prostrate form)
- *Lomandra longifolia* – sagg
- *Melaleuca pallida* – yellow bottlebrush



creeping boobialla

- *Microlaena stipoides* – weeping grass
- *Myoporum parvifolium* – creeping boobialla
- *Olearia tasmanica* – tasmanian daisybush
- *Olearia ramulosa* – twiggy daisybush

- *Ozothamnus scutellifolius* – buttonleaf everlastingbush
- *Ozothamnus obcordatus* – yellow everlastingbush
- *Patersonia occidentalis* – long purple flag
- *Pelargonium australe* – wild geranium



tussock grasses

- *Pimelia humilis* – dwarf riceflower
- *Poa species* – tussock grasses
- *Pultenaea pedunculata* – matted bush-pea
- *Rhodanthe anthemoides* – chamomile sunray
- *Rytidosperma species* (syn. *Austrodanthonia species*) – wallaby grasses



bower spinach

- *Stylidium graminifolium* – narrowleaf triggerplant
- *Styphelia adscendens* – golden heath
- *Tetragonia implexicoma* – bower spinach
- *Themeda triandra* – kangaroo grass



Nature Strip

## APPENDIX A: SUGGESTED PLANT SPECIES (CONT.)

### HEDGE SPECIES

It should be noted that some of these species will require more work than others to keep hedged.

#### Native

(TASMANIAN NATIVE DENOTED BY )

- *Acmena smithii* – lilly pilly
- *Agonis flexuosa* – willow myrtle

 *Callitris oblonga subspecies oblonga* – south esk pine



white correa

 *Correa alba var. alba* – white correa

 *Correa backhouseana var. backhouseana* – velvet correa

 *Dodonaea viscosa subspecies spatulata* – broadleaf hopbush

- *Ficus macrocarpa var. hillii* – hill's weeping fig

 *Goodenia ovata* – hop native-primrose

- *Grevillea victoriae* – royal or mountain grevillea

 *Kunzea ambigua* – white kunzea

- *Leptospermum petersonii* – lemon scented teatree



lemon bottlebrush

 *Melaleuca pallida* pictured – lemon bottlebrush

 *Melaleuca squarrosa* – scented paperbark

- *Melaleuca viminalis* – weeping bottlebrush

- *Myoporum insulare* – common boobialla

 *Ozothamnus purpurascens* – columnar everlastingbush

- *Pomaderris elliptica var. elliptica* – yellow dogwood
- *Syzygium paniculatum or australe* – lilly pilly



westringia species

- *Westringia fruticosa* – coastal rosemary

 *Westringia rigida* – stiff westringia

 *Westringia brevifolia* – shortleaf westringia

#### Exotic



box species

- *Buxus japonica or sempervirens or microphylla* – box
- *Coleonema pulchrum* – golden diosma

- *Cupressus leylandii* – leighton green cypress

- *Magnolia grandiflora* – magnolia

- *Nandina domestica* – sacred bamboo



kohuhu

- *Photinia robusta or fraseri* – photinia

- *Pittosporum tenuifolium* – kohuhu

- *Prunus laurocerasus or lustanica* – laurel

- *Viburnum tinus or odoratissimum* – sweet viburnum



Hedged Nature Strip