



**GLAMORGAN  
SPRING BAY  
COUNCIL**

## Nature Strip Maintenance Guideline

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## 1.1 Background

Council has adopted a Practice that identifies the important role the Community plays in maintaining nature strips adjoining their property.

This Guideline confirms Council's position that Council will not mow vegetated road verges and nature strips fronting private properties, commercial properties or properties owned by government authorities, except in key strategic locations and areas or where the service is provided under any assistance program.

Council generally relies on civic pride of its residents and property owners to help maintain the local amenity of their neighbourhoods by mowing the grassed nature strips adjoining their properties.

Council has traditionally, and will continue to provide assistance to members of the community to maintain grassed nature strips, in limited circumstances. It is acknowledged that not all nature strips are grassed, not all residents wish to have a grassed nature strip and in certain locations grass is not able to grow on the nature strips.

## 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this Guideline is to:

- confirm and recognise the community's role in maintaining nature strips;
- define the extent of Council involvement in the mowing of footpath/nature strips;
- define appropriate criteria for assessing requests by residents for Council assistance in mowing grassed nature strips; and
- recognise that the nature strip area is in most cases grassed however in some circumstances it can be modified.

## 1.3 Definitions

Term	Definition
Nature Strip	Means any Council owned and/or controlled land located between a constructed road and a parcel of private property, that is, the street verge. It is generally that portion of the street verge that is grassed and may contain street trees, driveways and/or footpaths. It does not include land reserves for a public purpose or bushland.
Key Strategic Locations and Areas	Means main roads and locations such as town centres, groups of shops, community facilities and high-profile public open space areas where a grassed nature strip or general <i>maintenance requirement exist</i> .

## 2.1 Scope

This Guideline applies to all nature strips within the Glamorgan Spring Bay Municipality.

## 3.1 Procedure Steps / Guiding Principles

Nature strips contribute significantly to the streetscape and visual amenity of local neighbourhoods. Council aims to maintain an overall consistency and appearance of nature strips.

Council maintains the street trees but relies on residents to maintain the grass. Council also relies on residents to keep garden plants within their property or along the fence line trimmed to ensure it does not obstruct pedestrian access on the footpath or nature strip and doesn't interfere with cyclist or motorist sightlines. It is Council's responsibility to ensure that members of the public are safe and not caused injury wherever possible while they are on Council owned footpaths and nature strips.

To ensure safety and amenity the following general principles apply:

- Narrow strip gardens between the footpath and the fence line can be paved, turfed or planted with small, low-growing, soft-foliaged plants which must be trimmed back away from the footpath.
- The footpath area, either formed concrete/asphalt pathway or unformed grass verge must be maintained with sufficient clearance (generally 1.2 - 1.5 metres wide) to allow pedestrian to walk along comfortably.
- Wide grass verges generally with street trees must be free of obstructions that interfere with a pedestrian walking on the nature strip or a driver and/or passenger using the roadway or driveway.

### **Areas that Council will Mow and Maintain**

Council undertakes to maintain the nature strips or verge areas that meet any of all the following requirements.

- Adjacent to Council facilities, parks and reserves.
- Nature strips at key strategic locations and areas, as specified in the table attached to this guideline.
- Nature strips where the resident or owner of the property is unable to undertake the work themselves a basic level of service to manage fire hazards will be applied.

The level and type of maintenance will be dependent upon and determined by operational and budget criteria. Maintenance activities may be carried out by Council or other contractors/service providers engaged by Council.

Grassed nature strips at key strategic locations and areas will be serviced (mown) on a regular scheduled basis as has been the practice.

### **Areas to be mowed by property owner / resident**

Council will not mow vegetated road verges and nature strips fronting private properties, commercial properties or properties owned by government authorities, except in key strategic. Council will conduct fire abatement mowing on verges and nature strips where necessary.

All areas not maintained by Council may be maintained by the property owner and/or residents of the private property at a regularity that suits the property owner adjacent. Grassed nature strips can

be mowed as regularly as required by residents, occupiers or property owners. There is no requirement to collect the mown grass.

There are risks in maintaining parts of the road reserve which property owners should be aware of. The main risk is where a mower might throw a stone or projectile and a vehicle or person be hurt or damaged by it.

The person doing the mowing would bear primary liability for the damage or injury should that occur.

### **Verge Mowing Assistance**

Residents may qualify for Home Care assistance through assessment by My Aged Care. Services provided under this system include home maintenance which includes mowing.

Where it is not possible for residents to attend to nature strips council will provide a minimum level of service to manage fire risks.

### **Modification to a nature strip**

Modifications of nature strips from traditional grass to low growing, soft foliage plants are supported by council. Any resident wishing to carry out modifications to the nature strip must apply in writing to council for approval prior to any works being carried out. Any proposal must comply with the following:

- The footpath area, either formed concrete/asphalt pathway or unformed grass verge must be maintained with sufficient clearance (generally 1.2 - 1.5 metres wide) to allow pedestrian to walk along comfortably.
- Where formed path exists, the planting must be kept back from the footpath and kerb edge by a minimum of 300mm to allow for safe pedestrian access along the footpath.
- The area to be improved must not be used for any other purpose other than the landscaping of the nature strip, to enhance the existing streetscape aspect of the area. There must not be any alienation of public land for private purposes.
- The landscape works must not represent an obstacle or an obstruction of any nature to the adjoining property owner(s) and/or users of the road or nature strip, including pedestrian access, kerb side parking and cyclists.
- All vegetation to be planted on the nature strip must be approved by council, must be kept in a clean, safe, healthy and attractive condition and understory plantings must not exceed 500mm in height.
- Hard landscaping elements such as retaining walls, ornaments, rocks and timber shall not be used.
- Irrigation systems must not be installed.

If Council gives approval for the modifications, Council will not contribute financially to the cost of approved work or its ongoing maintenance. This applies regardless of change of ownership/occupancy of a property.

Following the modification of the nature strip the property owner remains responsible for all maintenance works.

It is important to note that utility service authorities such as water, electricity, NBN, telecommunications, as well as Council all have access rights to the road reserve. These service authorities and Council may be required to excavate the nature strip periodically and residents who chose to modify the nature strip area will not be compensated for any loss of vegetation or landscaping items and will be required to reinstate the road verge at their own expense.

## **3.2 Roles and Responsibilities**

### Works and Infrastructure

Conduct the mowing and maintenance of nature strips. Assess application to modify nature strips. Engage with property owners / residents who do not maintain the nature strip adjacent to their premises.

## **4.1 Related Legislation**

Electricity and Wayleaves and Easements Act 2000  
Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999  
Building Act 2016  
Building Regulations 2020  
Fire services Act 1979  
Forest Practices Act 1985  
Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995  
Local Government Act 1993  
Local Government (Highways) Act 1982  
Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993  
Nature Conservation Act 2002  
Road Rules 2019  
Threatened Species Protection Act 1995  
Water Management Act 2000  
Water and Sewerage Industry Act 2008  
Weed Management Act 1999  
Urban Drainage Act 2013

## **4.2 Related Documents and Council Policy**

Asset Management Policy  
Tree Management Policy

## **4.3 Authorisation and Version Control**

VERSION 1  
July 2023  
Director Works & Infrastructure