

# NATURE STRIP GUIDELINES

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## COMMUNITY LOCAL LAW 2015

MAY 2022







# 1 INTRODUCTION

Nature strips account for a significant proportion of open space in the City of Kingston.

They play a range of important functions: practical, aesthetic and environmental.

Changes in climatic conditions and environmental action, including efficient water use and biodiversity goals, have resulted in more residents seeking alternatives to the traditional lawn nature strip.

Nature strips also provide opportunities for vibrant streetscapes and habitat creation through the use of creative plantings.

Council is responsible for ensuring nature strips allow for safe and accessible public use.

This document provides guidance for residents regarding the modification and maintenance of nature strips throughout the City of Kingston.

These Guidelines are designed to support residents in modifying their nature strips whilst complying with important safety and legal requirements.

# 2 GENERAL GUIDELINES

## BACKGROUND

Nature strips play an important role in the aesthetic, social and environmental health of the municipality.

Nature strips complement and enhance the streetscape by providing a 'green' zone and a buffer between pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Council consents to minor modifications to nature strips under strict adherence to these Guidelines.

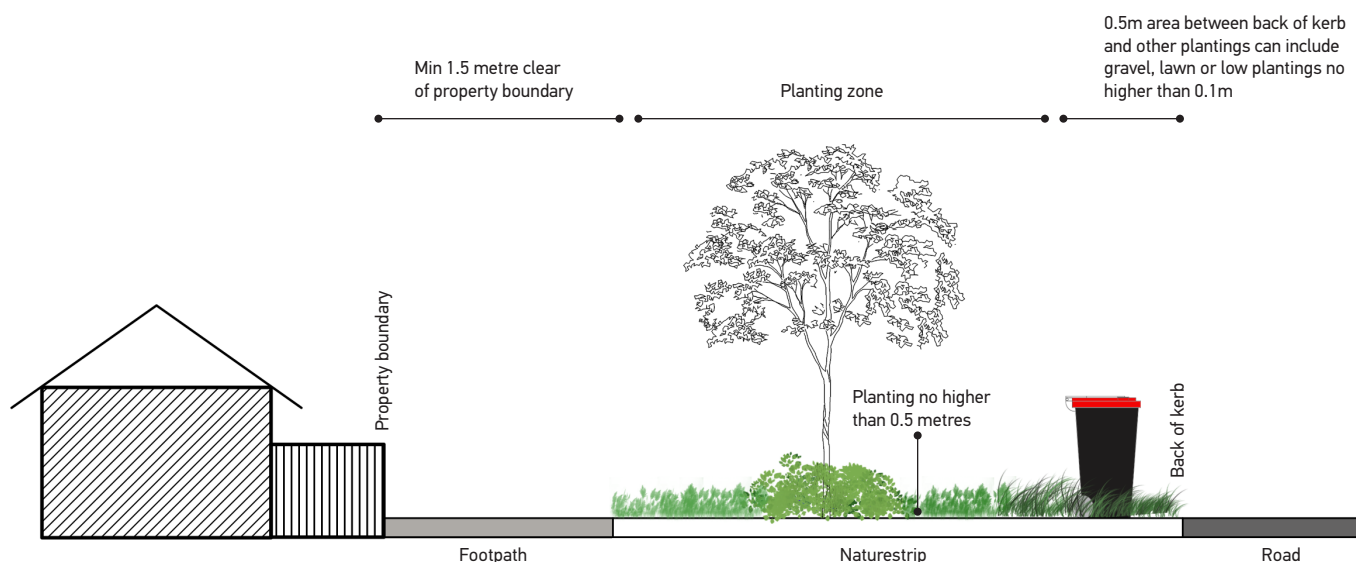
## DEFINITION

For the purpose of these guidelines, a nature strip is defined as an area of public land located between the property boundary and the back of the kerb, excluding the footpath.

In some cases, where no footpath is present, the nature strip area can be defined as being a minimum of 1.5 metres from the property boundary to the back of the kerb.

In the majority of cases, a nature strip contains a street tree and accommodates services such as gas, water, power and internet.

## DIAGRAM SHOWING GENERAL REQUIREMENTS



PLEASE NOTE: If there is no footpath, the planting zone will be minimum 1.5m from the property boundary.

## NATURE STRIP PLANTING AND LANDSCAPING GUIDELINES

Council supports nature strip modifications under the following guidelines:

- ✓ Plants must be maintained at a maximum height of 0.5m.
  - ✓ Plants are required to be set back 0.5m from the back of kerb. The set back area can be planted with groundcovers and low vegetation, not exceeding 0.1m in height, to allow for opening of car doors.
  - ✓ Nature strips on a corner property are limited to ground cover plants up to 0.2m only, to ensure sight lines for motorists and pedestrians.
  - ✓ Plants and mulch are to be maintained within the nature strip area and not encroach on the pedestrian footpath, kerb or road.
  - ✓ Modifications must not contaminate storm water drainage.
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## PERSPECTIVE IMAGE SHOWING GENERAL REQUIREMENTS



# 3 DESIGN OPTIONS FOR YOUR NATURESTRIP

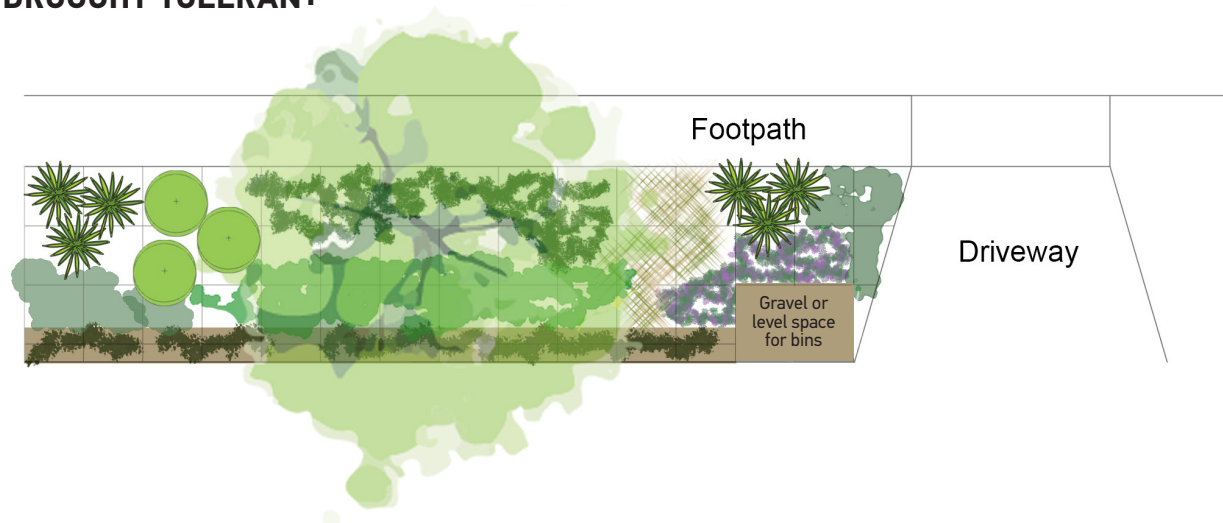
For residents wanting to renovate their nature strip, Council has developed a number of designs that can be used for different situations.

The ones shown in this guide are;

- Drought tolerant
- Shade tolerant
- Bee and butterfly attracting
- Coastal
- Native edible
- Permeable surface treatment

*Note - Each square in design = 1 square metre*

## DROUGHT TOLERANT



Lomandra 'Tanika'  
(Lomandra cultivar)



Brachyscombe multifida  
(Native Daisy)



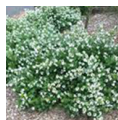
Dianella 'Little Rev'  
(Dianella)



Poa labillardieri  
(Tussock Grass)



Hardenbergia violacea 'Meema'  
(Native Sarsaparilla 'Meema')



Westringia fruticosa 'Low Horizon'  
(Coastal Rosemary cultivar)

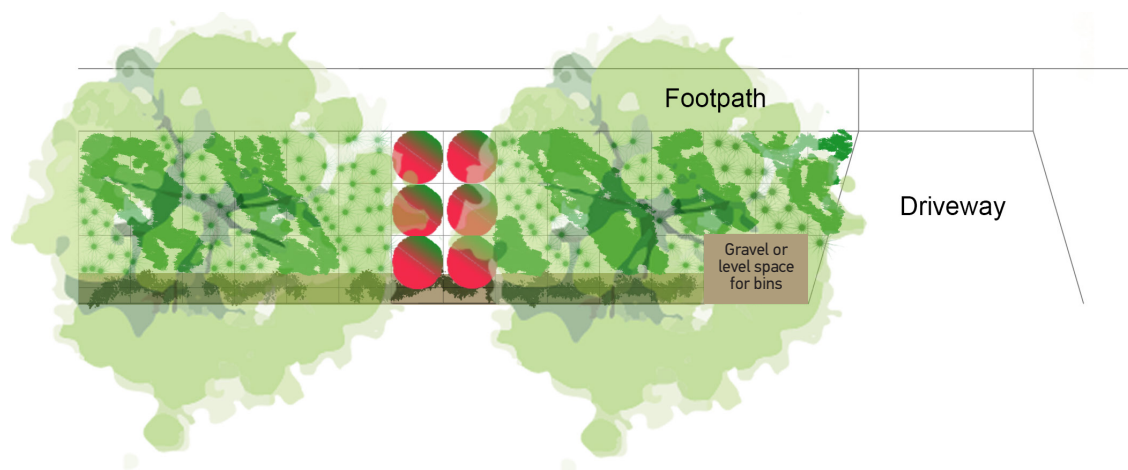


Correa glabra  
(prostrate form)  
(Rock Correa cultivar)

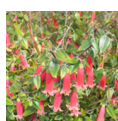


Low vegetation  
no higher than 0.1m

## SHADE TOLERANT



Libertia paniculata  
(Grass Flag)



Correa 'Dusky Bells'  
(Correa cultivar)

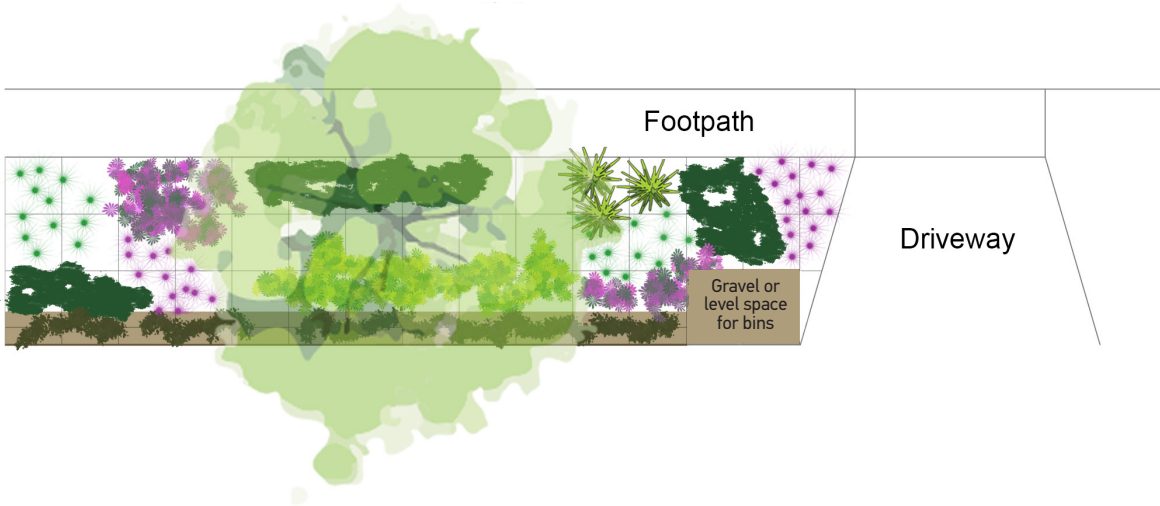


Pratia pedunculata  
(Trailing Pratia)



Low vegetation  
no higher than 0.1m

BEE AND BUTTERFLY ATTRACTING



Pelargonium australe  
(Austral's Stork Bill)



Libertia paniculata  
(Grass Flag)



Low vegetation  
no higher than 0.1m



Ficinia nodosa  
(Knobby Club Rush)



Chrysocephalum apiculatum  
(Common Everlasting)

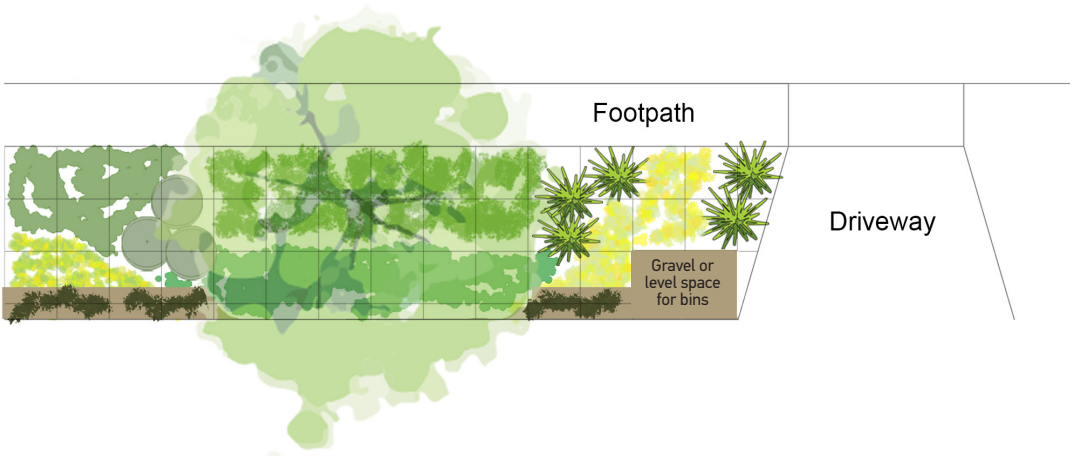


Pattersonia occidentalis  
(Long Purple Flag)



Westringia fruticosa 'Low Horizon'  
(Coastal Rosemary)

COASTAL



Ficinia nodosa  
(Knobby Club Rush)



Westringia fruticosa 'Low Horizon'  
(Coastal Rosemary)



Low vegetation  
no higher than 0.1m



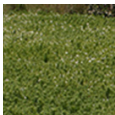
Bulbine bulbosa  
(Native Leek)



Chrysocephalum apiculatum  
(Common Everlasting)



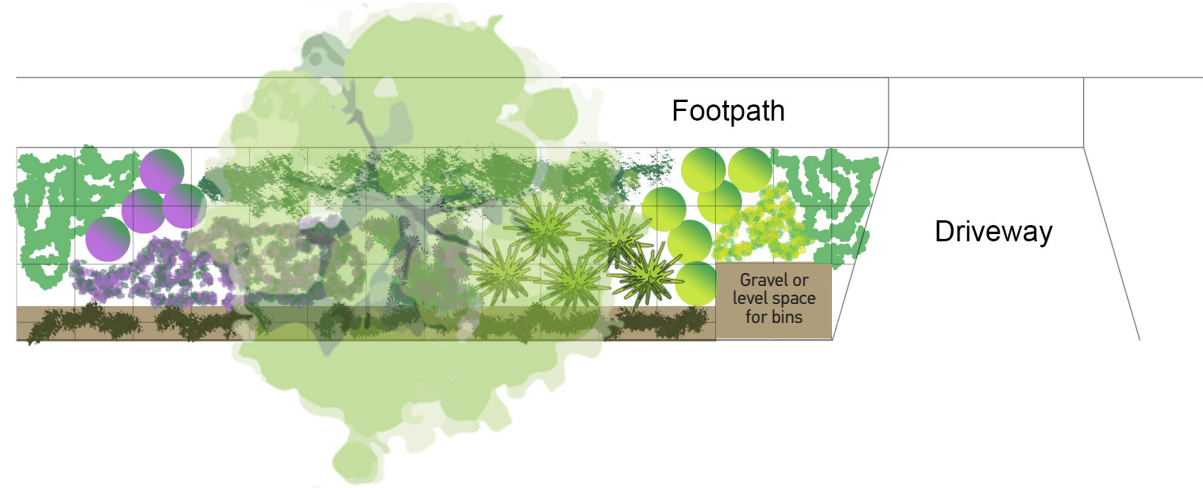
Leucophyta brownii  
(Cushion Bush)



Myoporum parvifolium  
(Common Boobialla)




NATIVE EDIBLE




 *Pelargonium australe*  
(Austral's Stork Bill)



 *Ficinia nodosa*  
(Knobby Club Rush)




 *Tetragonia implexicoma*  
(Bower Spinich)




 *Carpobrotus rossii*  
(Karkalla)




 *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*  
(Common Everlasting)



 Low vegetation  
no higher than 0.1m

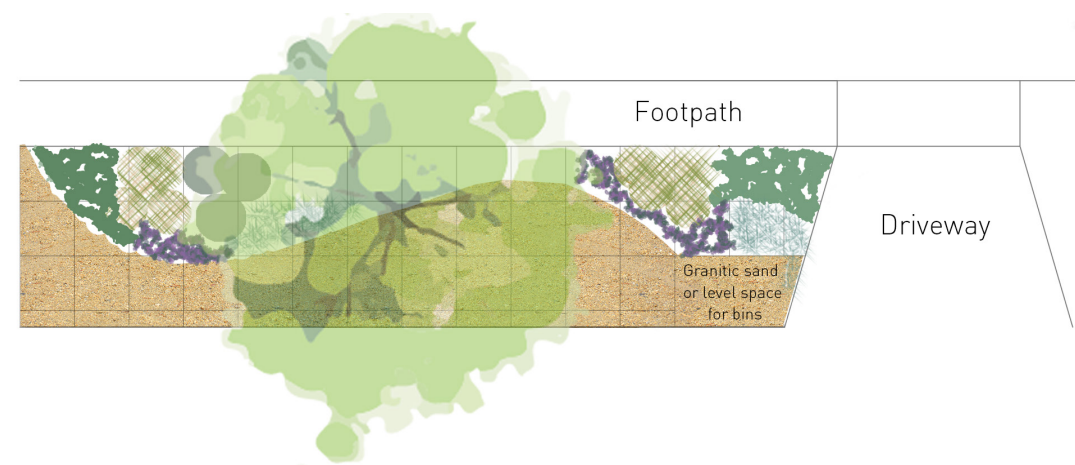


 *Barbarea australis*  
(Native Watercress)




 *Mentha australis*  
(River Mint)

PERMEABLE SURFACE TREATMENT




 *Festuca glauca*  
(Blue Fescue Grass)




 *Leucophyta brownii*  
(Cushion Bush)



 *Brachyscombe multifida*  
(Native Daisy)




 *Poa labillardieri* 'Eskdale'  
(Poa cultivar)



 *Dianella* 'Little Rev'  
(Dianella)



 Granitic sand

# 4 PLANT SPECIES

PLANT SPECIES	COMMON NAME	TYPE	HEIGHT X WIDTH	DROUGHT TOLERANT	SHADE TOLERANT	BEE AND BUTTERFLY	COASTAL	NATIVE EDIBLE
Apium prostratum	Sea Celery	Perennial Herb	50cm x 1.0m				✓	✓
Banksia integrifolia prostrate	Coastal Banksia	Prostrate	50cm x 2.0m	✓			✓	
Barbarea australis	Native Watercress	Perennial Herb	40cm x 30cm			✓		✓
Brachyscombe multifida*	Native Daisy	Groundcover	30cm x 50cm			✓	✓	
Bulbine bulbosa*	Yellow Bulbine Lilly/Native Leek	Perennial Herb	40cm x 50cm			✓		✓
Carpobrotus rossii*	Karkalla	Groundcover	Prostrate x 1.0m	✓		✓	✓	✓
Chrysocephalum* apiculatum	Everlasting Daisy	Clumping perennial	40cm x 1.0m	✓		✓		
Correa alba (prostrate form)	Correa cultivar	Prostrate	20cm x 70cm	✓			✓	
Correa 'Dusky Bells'	Correa cultivar	Compact shrub	60cm x 1.0-2.0m	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Correa glabra (prostrate form)	Rock Correa Cultivar	Prostrate	50cm x 1.0m	✓		✓	✓	
Correa reflexa (prostrate form)	Native Fuschia Cultivar	Prostrate	50cm x 1.0m	✓		✓	✓	
Dianella revoluta 'Little Rev'	Flax Lilly Cultivar	Lilly	40cm x 40cm			✓	✓	
Dichondra repens*	Kidney Weed	Groundcover	Prostrate x 1.0m	✓	✓		✓	
Disphyma crassifolium*	Rounded Noon Flower	Ground cover	Prostrate x 1.0m			✓	✓	
Festuca glauca	Blue Fescue Grass	Graminoid-Grass	50cm x 50cm	✓	✓		✓	
Ficinia nodosa*	Knobby Club Rush	Graminoid-Rush	60cm x 60cm	✓		✓	✓	
Grevillea (prostrate form)	Grevillea Cultivar	Groundcover	Prostrate x 2.0	✓		✓	✓	
Hardenbergia violacea 'Meema'	Purple Coral Pea Cultivar	Small Shrub	45cm x 1.5m	✓		✓		
Hibertia scandens	Snake Vine	Groundcover	50cm x 2.0m	✓		✓	✓	
Hymenosporum flavum 'Gold Nugget'	Native Frangipani Dwarf Cultivar	Small Shrub	60cm x 75cm	✓		✓	✓	
Leucophyta brownii*	Cushion Bush	Small Shrub	50cm x 80cm	✓		✓	✓	
Libertia paniculata	Grass Flag	Clumping Perennial	60cm x 50cm		✓	✓		
Lomandra filiformis	Wattle Matt Rush	Graminoid - Rush	30cm x 30cm			✓		
Lomandra longifolia 'Tanika'	Lomandra Cultivar	Graminoid - Rush	60cm x 60cm	✓		✓	✓	

PLANT SPECIES	COMMON NAME	TYPE	HEIGHT X WIDTH	DROUGHT TOLERANT	SHADE TOLERANT	BEE AND BUTTERFLY	COASTAL	NATIVE EDIBLE
<i>Mentha australis</i>	River Mint	Clumping Perennial	50cm x 1.0m		✓	✓		✓
<i>Mentha satereioides</i> 'Bush Mint'	Native Pennyroyal	Clumping Perennial	30cm x 50cm			✓		✓
<i>Microtena stipoides</i> *	Weeping Grass	Graminoid - Grass	30-60cm x 1.0m	✓	✓	✓		
<i>Myoporun parvifolium</i> *	Creeping Boobialla	Groundcover	Prostrate x 2.0m	✓		✓	✓	
<i>Pattersonia occidentalis</i> *	Long Purple Flag	Iris Wildflower	30cm x 50cm	✓		✓		
<i>Pelargonium</i> * australe	Austral's Storks Bill	Perennial Herb	50cm x 70cm			✓	✓	
<i>Pimelea humilis</i>	Dwarf Rice Flower	Small shrub	60cm x 1.0m	✓		✓	✓	
<i>Poa labillardieri</i> *	Common Tussock Grass	Graminoid - tussock	30-50cm x 40cm	✓		✓		
<i>Poa labillardieri</i> 'Eskdale'	Poa cultivar	Graminoid - tussock	30-50cm x 40cm	✓			✓	
<i>Poa poiformis</i>	Coastal Tussock Grass	Graminoid - tussock	40 cm x 40cm	✓			✓	
<i>Pratia pendunculata</i>	Trailing Pratia	Groundcover	Prostrate x 1.0m		✓	✓		
<i>Tetragonia implexicoma</i> *	Bower Spinach	Groundcover	Prostrate x 2.0m	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Viola hederacea</i> *	Native Violet	Groundcover	Prostrate x 1.0m		✓			
<i>Westringia fruticosa</i> 'Grey Box'	Coastal Rosemary Cultivar	Compact shrub	40cm x 40cm	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<i>Westringia fruticosa</i> 'Low Horizon'	Coastal Rosemary Cultivar	Groundcover	30cm x 70cm	✓		✓	✓	

\* Indicates plant is indigenous to Kingston

This is a suggested native plant list to help with ideas. You can replace species with your own selections.

Please note that Council doesn't support the planting of plants with fruit or berries as these can create a slipping hazard.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information about indigenous plant species [kingston.vic.gov.au/g4w](https://kingston.vic.gov.au/g4w)

# 4 COMPLIANCE

## WORKS ON NATURE STRIPS MUST ENSURE THE FOLLOWING

As nature strips form part of the road network, Council is required to provide a safe environment, respond to any public safety issues and minimise the risk to the community that could arise from nature strip landscaping. As a result, modifications to nature strips must ensure the following:

- Provide a clear line of sight for motorists and ease of pedestrian movement, in particular alighting from cars from both the street, and vehicle crossovers.
- Provide ease of access to underground services (such as electrical, communication, water, gas) and overhead services (street tree pruning and powerlines).
- Residents need to contact Dial Before You Dig (DBYD) on 1100 or visit [1100.com.au](http://1100.com.au) before undertaking excavation works to confirm the location of any underground services. Residents are responsible for any damage to services located within the nature strip.
- Residents must ensure the footpath, kerb and roadway remain clear of any plant or mulch materials.
- There must be enough level space provided on the nature strip for the placement of two mobile garbage bins.
- Although permeable surfaces such as compact granitic sand are permitted on nature strips (for bin placement or as a path through vegetation) Council recommends a minimum ratio of two-thirds plants to one-third permeable surface.

## PROHIBITED NATURE STRIP TREATMENTS

- Hard surfaces such as pavers, concrete or asphalt
- Irrigation systems
- Temporary or permanent electrical wiring on a nature strip including lighting of trees.
- Street tree planting (other than those planted by Council)
- Plants that grow greater than 500mm high
- Synthetic turf
- Changes to gradient of the land
- Plants that are prickly or spiky
- Raised surfaces and barriers
- Retaining walls and steps
- Garden features such as rocks, ponds, water baths, sleepers, statues and solar lights
- Materials such as straw, underfelt, stones, scoria, blue metal, pebbles or other loose stones
- Residents cannot remove, lop or prune street trees.
- Residents cannot plant any trees within a nature strip and can contact Council to request planting of a street tree.
- Weed plant species as defined in Council's Environmental Weed List: [kingston.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Local-Laws-and-Health/Local-Laws](http://kingston.vic.gov.au/About-Us/Local-Laws-and-Health/Local-Laws)
- Works that create a fire or health hazard.
- Herbicide application to permanently devoid the nature strip of grass



## **MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF NATURE STRIPS**

While Council is the responsible authority, it does not undertake any renovation or maintenance (including mowing and watering) of nature strips unless the condition of the nature strip is considered to pose a hazard or Council needs to update drainage assets.

The maintenance of a modified nature strip is the responsibility of residents who must ensure all plantings adhere to these Guidelines. Residents must maintain their nature strips free of hazards to ensure safety for footpath and road users.

Council and utility/service authorities that supply utilities such as water, gas, electricity and telecommunications, may from time to time require access to the nature strip to perform maintenance on their assets which are on or buried beneath the nature strip. Council and utility/service authorities are responsible for repair and reinstatement of the nature strip upon work completion however are not required to reinstate nature strips with landscape materials plants other than grass.

No compensation will be provided to residents by Council should any infrastructure or street tree pruning work have a negative impact on nature strip landscaping.

If the nature strip is damaged as a result of building works on private property, the builder or property owner is responsible for repair and reinstatement of the nature strip.

Council reserves the right to reinstate or install a footpath or part of the kerb, channel, or roadway at any time. Council will not reimburse for loss of plants/ damage to landscaping where footpath or road works occur.

## **STREET TREES**

Street trees are planted and maintained by Council in accordance with Council's Street and Park Tree Management Strategy 2019 and Tree Management Guidelines.

Street trees are inspected on a two-year cycle and if required, pruned to ensure tree health and required clearances that satisfy Council's legislative and management obligations.

Street trees are planted at regular intervals along the length of a street and at a density that will provide a sense of continuity and scale to the streetscape. Where reasonable, one tree will be planted in front of each property throughout the City. The growth characteristics of the tree and the capacity of the street will also determine spacing.

Residents are not permitted to prune, remove or plant any trees within a nature strip. If you'd like to request a street tree, contact Council on 1300 653 356.

## **APPLYING FOR AN EXEMPTION TO THE GUIDELINES**

Some Council authorised projects such as Water Sensitive Urban Design drainage landscapes, rain gardens, habitat gardens and street gardens will be considered for exemption permits.

Residents wishing to apply for an exemption to these guidelines can do so by submitting a written request to Local Laws, outlining the modifications they would like to make.

Exemption requests are reviewed by the Nature Strip Review Panel, consisting of Officers from Local Laws and Open Space.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY**

As a nature strip forms part of the road reserve and is public land, Council will take appropriate action to rectify problems in relation to tripping hazards or safety issues.

Any feature that is deemed to be an immediate public risk such as a pedestrian trip or fall hazard, obstruction or other hazard may be removed from the nature strip without consultation or warning.

If the property owner fails to comply with these Guidelines, a delegated Council Officer will issue a "Notice to Comply" under Council's Community Local Law, requesting that the specific problem be fixed by an allocated date. Failure to take action following a "Notice to Comply" can result in infringement notices being issued. Failure to comply with these Guidelines may also be a breach of the Road Management Act 2004 (Vic) for which penalties may apply.

## **NATURE STRIP REVIEW PANEL AND PROCESS**

If a resident is dissatisfied with a direction from Council regarding modifications to their nature strip, the resident may submit their concerns in writing to the Nature Strip Review Panel for consideration.

Once a submission is received, the Nature Strip Review Panel will assess the work already undertaken in conjunction with the Council Officer's decision and will notify the resident of the outcome of the review.

The Nature Strip Review Panel consists of Council Officers from Local Laws and Open Space.

## **EXISTING MODIFIED NATURE STRIPS**

Alterations may be required to nature strips that have already been landscaped or modified by residents in order that they meet the requirements of these Guidelines. Alterations to these nature strips will need to be undertaken by the relevant property owner, in discussion with Council and in compliance with any other laws if applicable.

## **ROAD MANAGEMENT ACT 2004 (VIC)**

Council is the co-ordinating road authority for municipal roads within the municipality of Kingston.

Nature strips form part of road reserves and works on roads are subject to the Road Management Act 2004 (Vic) which requires consent of the co-ordinating road authority. Council consents to nature strip modifications provided any modifications are made in accordance with these Guidelines.

The Department of Transport is the co-ordinating road authority for arterial roads, and these Guidelines are not intended to apply to arterial roads.

## **PARKING ON NATURE STRIP**

Parking on the nature strip in Victoria is prohibited by the Road Safety Road Rules 2017. Signage is therefore not required to prohibit parking on the nature strip, except where compliance is proven to be a major safety issue.

## **CONTACT**

For further information or guidance regarding alternative nature strip treatments, please contact Council's Open Space Department on 1300 653 356.



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 PO Box 1000, Mentone 3194

 1300 653 356

 [info@kingston.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@kingston.vic.gov.au)

 [kingston.vic.gov.au](http://kingston.vic.gov.au)

