



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

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GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL NATURE STRIP PLANTING GUIDELINES



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Glen Eira City Council acknowledges the Boonwurrung/ Bunurong and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Owners and Custodians, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to land and waterways. Council extends its respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Council honours the rich histories and cultures of First Nations peoples and recognises and values the important contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in enriching our community.

We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and are committed to a *Reconciliation Action Plan* which is underpinned by the principles of self-determination. We work towards improved outcomes and long-term generational change, and to consolidate Glen Eira as a culturally safe place for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are committed to achieving equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to live healthy and prosperous lives and to improve life outcomes for current and future generations.

Glen Eira resides on country that always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

WHAT IS A NATURE STRIP?

A PRACTICAL FEATURE

A nature strip is an area of public land that lies between the boundary of private property and the road kerb. It does not include the paved footpath area, the kerb itself or driveways.

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

Nature strips also contain above- and below-ground public utility services including water, sewerage, gas, electricity, and communications infrastructure. They provide space for waste and recycling collection.

AN ATTRACTIVE DETAIL

Streetscapes and road corridors are the largest public spaces in a city, and likely to be the most utilised.

These major public spaces are typically limited in their greenery, being largely practical, functional spaces with solid surfaces to safely facilitate movement of people and vehicles.

By the nature of their existence, nature strips play a crucial role in keeping our neighbourhoods healthy and attractive. They help the environment by soaking up rain and reducing water run-off, increasing moisture levels in the air and soil and playing a key role in reducing urban temperatures.

Nature strips provide areas for the integration of trees and other vegetation into our urban streetscapes, and using plans of action, such as Glen Eira's *Urban Forest Strategy*, these spaces will be essential to increasing canopy cover and reducing the effect of heat islands throughout the municipality.



Nature strips also provide opportunities to enhance habitat and urban biodiversity through the planting of mixed shrubs and groundcovers, particularly when these species are indigenous. While areas may not appear large enough to make a difference, it is increasingly recognised that many small areas of biodiversity can have a valuable, cumulative effect on species diversity in heavily urbanised environments.

BEFORE YOU PLANT

COVERING THE BASICS

Ensure you have done the following:

- > Read these guidelines to ensure you understand the requirements.
- > Talk to your neighbours. Let them know what you are planning and discuss any concerns.
- > Choose indigenous plants for your nature strip garden to promote biodiversity and improve habitat connectivity throughout the municipality.
- > Plant drought-tolerant species to reduce water use.
- > Get an approved Nature Strip Planting Permit before commencing any works.
- > Consider safety, particularly when planting near roads.

LEGACY GARDENS

Many nature strips are already planted in Glen Eira.

There is no expectation that these gardens will be removed or modified, even if they do not fully comply with the new guidelines.

Council is sometimes required to investigate nature-strip gardens where a safety concern has been raised. In these instances, we work with affected residents to modify and maintain the gardens to ensure public safety. In rare situations where there is a continued safety issue, Council has the option to utilise local laws to issue orders and penalties.

CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

Nature strips are an important part of the municipality's public space network. They are required to be maintained to allow safe access for all. Therefore, there are several clearance requirements to be aware of and adhere to when planning and planting.

Within clearance areas, you can only grow turf, low grasses, ground cover or install graded mulch.

FOOTPATHS

Footpaths need to be kept clear of vegetation so that everyone can use them. Vegetation that encroaches onto the path can reduce accessibility for prams, wheelchairs, scooters and people who might need assistance with mobility.

- > A minimum of 30cm clearance is required to allow for pedestrian safety.
- > Plants must always be kept trimmed back from the path edge.

KERBSIDES

Nature strip planting can reduce safe and accessible access from the road to the footpath. Plants growing over kerbs can also restrict storm water flow.

- > A minimum 60cm clearance is required from the kerb to allow for safe access to and from parked vehicles.
- > A 1.5m clearance is required where there is a disabled parking bay.
- > Plants must always be kept trimmed back from the kerb edge.
- > Ensure a suitable area for rubbish bin collection is kept clear.

DRIVEWAYS, INTERSECTIONS, AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

- > A minimum one metre clearance on either side of a driveway is required to allow for car doors, sight lines and pedestrian safety.
- > No plants exceeding 50cm must be grown within two metres of a driveway or pedestrian crossing.
- > No plants exceeding 50cm must be grown within 10 metres of a corner or intersection.

SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- > Bollards, telecommunication pits and poles require a minimum 50cm clearance area around them.
- > Fire hydrants, pay phones, public seats, bike stands and loading zones require a minimum one metre clearance.

WASTE COLLECTION

Residential waste collection is an essential service and space is required for multiple bins to be placed on the nature strip for accessible collection. Depending on whether you reside at a single, dual or multiple-occupancy address, there may be different requirements for the amount of space necessary for safe bin placement.

Standard bin sizes provided to residents in Glen Eira are 120L and 240L, with dimensions as follows:

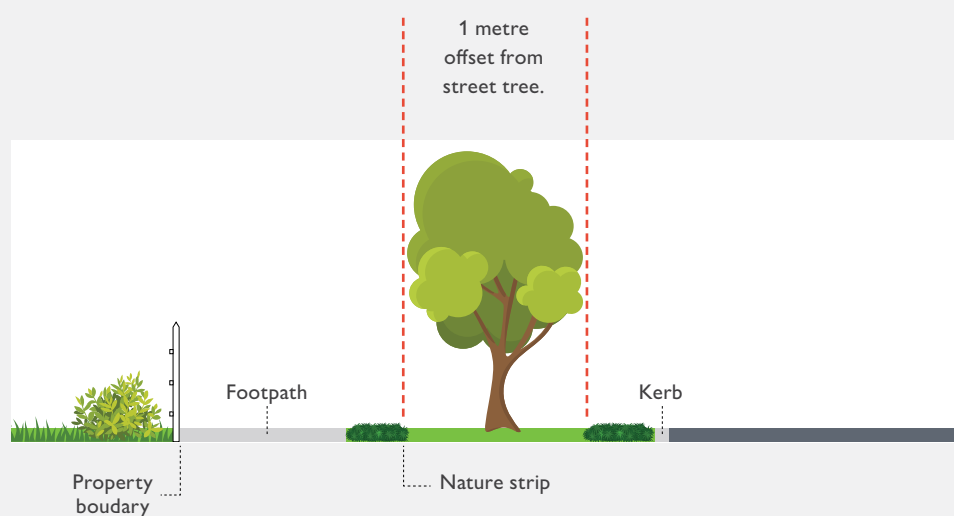
- > For a 120L bin — height 85cm, width 41cm and depth 41cm
- > For a 240L bin — height 95cm, width 50cm and depth 57cm

Bins must be able to be placed on level ground on the kerbside of your nature strip. Easy access should be considered when designing the layout for your nature strip works. This area may be kept as turf or surfaced with graded mulch, granitic or groundcovers.

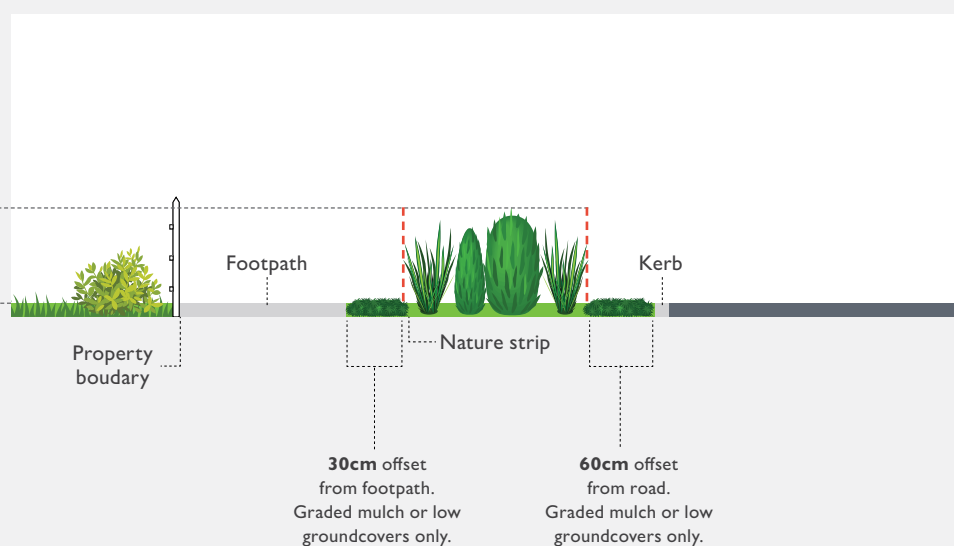


NATURE STRIP PLANTING GUIDELINES:

210-centimetre nature strip (minimum width) with a street tree

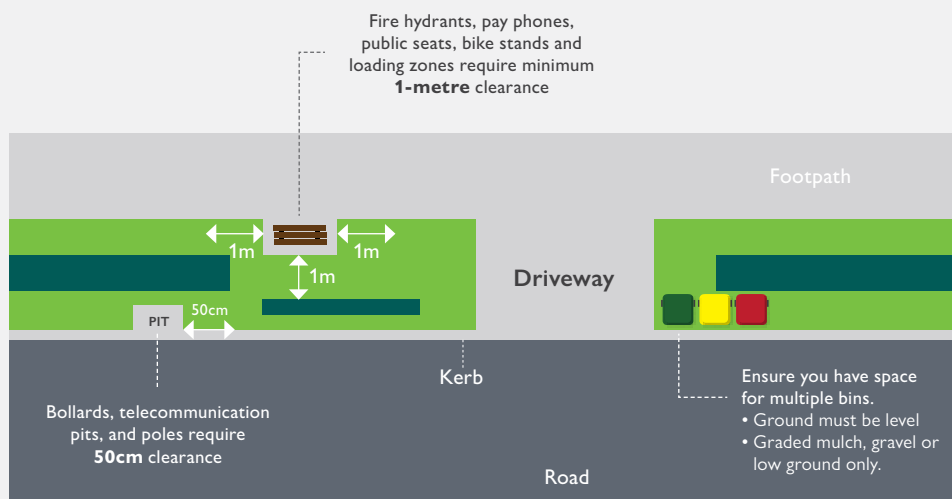
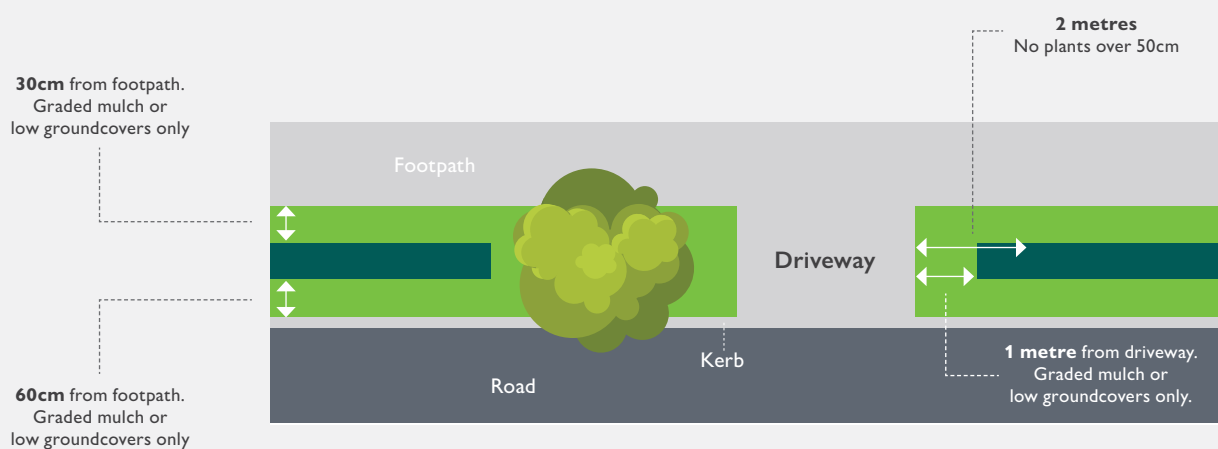


■ 1 metre maximum height of plants.



NATURE STRIP PLANTING GUIDELINES:

210-centimetre nature strip without a street tree





**THE BASICS:
WHAT'S OK AND
WHAT'S NOT?**

THE BASICS: WHAT'S OK AND WHAT'S NOT

WHAT YOU CAN PLANT

Annuals, perennials, ground cover, low shrubs and low grasses are ideal. High plants can block sight lines for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers, which can cause safety concerns particularly for young children.

The tallest specimen that can be planted must not grow above one metre, with additional height restrictions as outlined in the clearance requirements.

Plants or materials which could have negative environmental outcomes are not permitted. This includes but is not limited to weed species and poisonous or thorny plants.

Unfortunately, soil contamination (eg. lead) is common in urban areas and airborne contaminants can settle on plants along streets. These contaminants can transfer to edible plants. Due to potential health risks, Council recommends that you do not eat plants grown directly in your nature strip. If you decide to proceed with planting edible crops, the nature-strip soil should be tested for contaminants such as lead and any other potential health risks understood.

Simple, low-cost soil testing service for can be obtained prior to planting any food crops. For more information, visit <https://www.360dustanalysis.com>.

Crops that bear fruit are better than leafy greens or root vegetables. Consider the addition of compost and organic matter to assist in improving soil health over time. Please note that nature strips are accessible to everyone and nothing can be enforced to prevent others from helping themselves to what is grown there.

ROCKS AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure included within nature strip gardens has the potential to become unsafe and cause accidents.

No elements aside from outdoor plants and mulch are permitted in nature strip gardens. Materials or structures which are not permitted include (but are not limited to) bricks or pavers, rocks, stones, fences, sleepers or edges, planter boxes and other raised structures, irrigation systems, ornaments (includes gnomes and bird baths), and bollards.

Synthetic turf or the installation of hard, stony surfaces is not permitted. Herbicide applications that permanently remove the nature strip of vegetation are prohibited.

Please contact Council if you are unsure if an item can be included in your nature-strip garden.



TREES

Street trees provide shade, shelter, improve aesthetics and offer a haven for urban wildlife.

Trees growing within our streetscapes often have many of their critical roots located within the nature strip and must deal with harsh growing conditions due to the environmental constraints of our streets and paved urban landscapes.

As such, it is important to protect their root zone to allow them to access available water and nutrients to help them grow and thrive.

Newly planted trees need time for roots to establish. Allowing roots of new trees to establish for two years without competing with other plants for water or nutrients gives the tree its best chance to develop into a strong, healthy specimen.

You can identify newly establishing trees as they will have stakes, mulch and plastic water wells. Once the two-year establishment period is completed then residents are welcome to plant their nature strip.

A minimum radius of one metre must be kept clear of the tree's trunk to protect the root flare, which is where the tree roots grow out into the surrounding soil.

Always be careful when working around tree roots by using only hand tools when directly beneath the tree's canopy. If an area is hard to dig, don't force it. A tree root may be lying under that section of soil and could be damaged.

Do not mound soil, mulch or grass clippings against the trunk, and ensure that no changes in soil level take place, including excavation or the building up of soil within the tree's drip line, as this can have a major impact on the tree's health.

Though trees may already exist, residents are not permitted to plant any trees within a nature strip. If you want a tree on the nature strip, contact Council to request installation.

Residents are prohibited from removing, lopping or pruning street trees or damaging tree roots. If you need advice regarding your application in relation to street trees or their root systems, please contact Council and ask to speak with one of our arborists.



DIAL BEFORE YOU DIG

Before making changes to your nature strip, always check for underground services. To do this, contact Dial Before You Dig on 1100 or apply online at www.1100.com.au

ACCESS FOR UTILITY COMPANIES

While Council provides permission for residents to plant areas of the nature strip, utility companies may require access to their infrastructure for upgrades or repairs.

Please be aware that the utility companies are obligated only to repair the nature strip with grass.

MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF NATURE STRIPS

The planted area must be maintained and kept neat and tidy. Plants must be healthy and thriving, with no weeds, pests or diseases present.

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.

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 provide reimbursement for loss of plants or damage to landscaping where footpath or road works occur.

CAR PARKING

Nature strips are not for the parking of vehicles. Parking on them can damage the nature-strip surface, trees and root systems, kerb and channel, paths, house drain connections and other underground services.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I NO LONGER WISH TO MAINTAIN MY NATURE STRIP PLANTING?

If you decide you no longer want to maintain your plantings on the nature strip, you are required to reinstate the area to natural lawn level with the footpath and kerb.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

The property owner, or tenant empowered to act on their behalf, is responsible for obtaining all necessary approvals before residents plant on nature strips.

Please ensure you have obtained a permit before planting your nature strip. If you do not obtain a permit, or fail to meet the conditions of the permit, Council or utility-asset owners may require you to return the nature strip to its original condition.

YOU CAN MAKE APPLICATIONS ON COUNCIL'S WEBSITE

Visit this website to make your application www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/services/planning-and-building/building/permits/nature-strips

Before lodging, you will need the following:

- > Property owner's or body-corporate consent (if you are renting or leasing, or living in a multiple-occupancy dwelling)
- > Evidence there are no services that will prohibit your proposal
- > A planting schedule or plan.

This information can be uploaded and included with your application.

Council officers aim to inspect and assess applications within 28 days of lodgement.

Once you receive your Nature Strip Planting Permit, you must commence work within 12 months.

CONTACT US

For further information or guidance, contact Council's Parks Department on 03 9524 3333, Monday to Friday, 8am to 5.30pm (Tuesday 8am to 7.15pm)

FURTHER RESOURCE

Council has prepared a guide to the indigenous plants of Glen Eira. You can download the resource at the following link

www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/media/3007/indigenous-plants-of-glen-eira-2018.pdf



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

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National Relay Service

If you are deaf, hearing-impaired, or speech-impaired, we ask that you call us via the National Relay Service and then ask for (03) 9524 3333.

Online: <https://internet-relay.nrsCALL.gov.au>

Teletypewriter (TTY): 13 36 77

Speak and Listen: 1300 555 727

Social media

Glen Eira City Council:

www.facebook.com/GlenEiraCityCouncil

@cityofgleneira:

www.instagram.com/cityofgleneira

Glen Eira arts, gallery and events:

www.facebook.com/gleneiraarts

www.instagram.com/gleneiraarts

Glen Eira Leisure:

www.facebook.com/GESACOnline

<https://www.instagram.com/gleneiraleisure>

Glen Eira Libraries and Learning Centres:

www.facebook.com/GlenEiraLibraries

<https://www.instagram.com/gleneiralibraries>

Glen Eira Sustainable Living:

www.facebook.com/sustainablelivinggleneira

Glen Eira Youth Services:

www.facebook.com/GlenEiraYouthServices

www.instagram.com/gleneirayouthservices

