

8.12 Nature Strip Landscaping

Council will permit residents to plant the nature strip in the front or rear of their residence, subject to receiving a Nature strip Landscaping Permit.

Rationale

Council support residents providing an alternative to a gravel Nature strip, at their own cost, because:

- It encourages the community to think about the standard of the Shire of Moora Nature strips and the presentation of our community
- Encourage people to take responsibility and a sense of ownership for their Nature strip
- Provide residents with a choice of landscape options on their Nature strip
- Validate those in the community who have already taken the initiative and landscaped their Nature strip
- Aim to ultimately develop a culture of pride within the community about the towns overall presentation
- There are some social advantages of a planted Nature strip

Nature strip Landscaping Guidelines

The policy provides guidelines of residents wanting to plant out the Nature strip in front of their property.

Planting Details

Residents will be able to plant out their Nature strips with turf, ground cover plants and a range of low growing shrubs.

Council will permit a wide range of plants and grasses, however Council will not permit the use of plants that are woody plants, shrubs grown to 1m or higher which hide line of sight and weed species.

Residents will be required to plant ground cover only, on the kerb side (to 1 metre from back of kerb), in order to make provision for the opening of car doors. Corner block planting will be limited to ground cover plants only to ensure a good line of sight for motorists and pedestrians.

Planted Nature strips must provide suitable space for the provision of refuse and future recycling bins.

In all cases, due consideration will be given for the need to provide safe and suitable access to the footpath for people exiting a parked car.

Residents are not permitted to plant or remove a street tree unless done in consultation with Council.

Pruning of street trees will remain the responsibility of council.

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Mulch Details

Fine non-organic mulches (75mm depth) and organic mulches such as wood chips will be allowed.

Mulches and garden debris can be the cause of storm water blockages therefore planted Nature strips must be well maintained.

Lawns are encouraged as they contain the soil and give a clean fresh appearance in an otherwise harsh environment.

Council at its discretion can supply garden mulch and lawn thinning at particular times of the year to Shire residents. Please note that these products will not be delivered to the premises.

Paving Details

Any paving or stepping stones will need to be non slip surface. No tripping hazards are permitted.

Irrigation Systems

Council will permit and encourage irrigation systems to be installed in the Nature strips to maintain the grassed or planted Nature strip to an attractive standard. Reticulation equipment must be below ground level (pop up sprinkler) to avoid pedestrian injury.

Rocks and Retaining Walls not permitted

Council will not permit rocks, bluestone pitchers, railway sleepers or retaining walls to be installed in Nature strips. These items are all potentially tripping hazards so cannot be included in the Nature strip.

Excavation & Cultivation

Residents will be permitted to use mechanical means of excavation (bobcat/dingo) or cultivation (rotary hoe) however due to the infrastructure that may be underground or the damage that may occur to street trees, the owner/occupier is advised to contact "Dial Before You Dig" Tel 1100.

The owner/ occupier is responsible for repairing any damage to infrastructure caused by any landscaping works.

Utilities and Maintenance Work

Organisations that supply water, gas, electricity and telecommunications may require access to the Nature strip to do the maintenance work. The utility organisations are required to reinstate the Nature strip following their maintenance work. However, council cannot guarantee that any of the maintenance contractors will replace plants and mulch in the same condition as prior to the maintenance work.

Public Liability

Residents are reminded that they plant the Nature strip at their own expense and own risk.

Owner/occupier will be responsible for any damage caused to infrastructure by the works; digging may expose some underground services therefore owner/occupiers are required to contact Dial Before You Dig” Council require the owner/occupier to provide a plan showing all infrastructures and proposed landscaping details.

Maintenance Responsibilities

Residents are required to keep the Nature strip in a well- maintained and safe condition at all times including:

- Plants are to be pruned to a height of no more than 1 metre at all times.
- Any mulch cover is to be maintained over the Nature strip.
- No mulch is allowed on the footpath, driveways or in the curb, channel and road surface.
- The Nature strip is to be free of any tripping hazards and any protruding objects.

Approval Process for Nature strip Landscaping Permit

Residents will be required to complete a Nature strip Landscaping Permit application form, including:

- Provide a list of plants to be used;
- Mulch to be used;
- Other details; and
- A Nature strip Landscaping Permit fee does not apply;

On receipt of relevant fees a Council officer will assess and approve the Nature strip Landscaping Permit, provided it conforms to the above conditions

Residents must commence the nature strip works within one month and complete the works within 3 months

A Council officer will inspect completed Nature strip Landscape works and confirm that a nature strip is safe

A register of Nature strip Landscaping Permit will be kept.

Non Compliance of Nature strip Landscaping/Maintenance Process

Council will take action to rectify problems in relation to tripping hazards or safety issues.

Council Officer (s) will write to the relevant property owner requesting that they attend to the problem.

Preferred material for town site nature strips is blue metal dust, all future works including driveways, drainage, footpaths and curbing undertaken on nature strips are reinstated using blue metal dust.

Where existing gravel surfaces remain only small maintenance tasks be carried out using the gravel.

All nature strips excluding owner/occupier planted nature strips continue to be sprayed for weeds each year