

INNER WEST

Living Streets

Verge Garden and
Adopt-a-Spot Guidelines

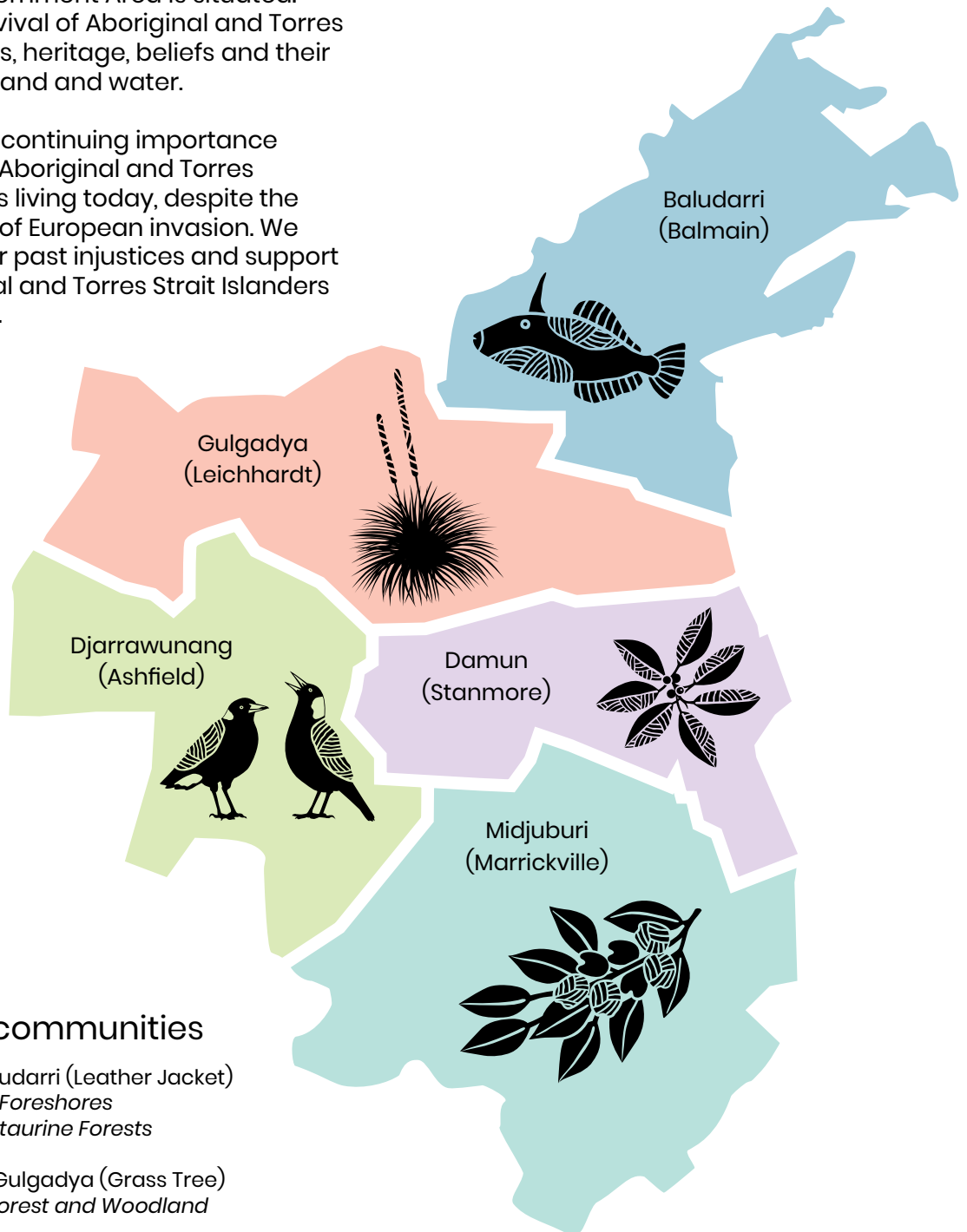
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Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges the Gadigal and Wangal peoples of the Eora Nation, who are the traditional custodians of the lands in which the Inner West Local Government Area is situated. We celebrate the survival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, heritage, beliefs and their relationship with the land and water.

We acknowledge the continuing importance of this relationship to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living today, despite the devastating impacts of European invasion. We express our sorrow for past injustices and support the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to self-determination.



LGA vegetation communities

- Balmain Ward – Baludarri (Leather Jacket)
Coastal Sandstone Foreshores
Forest/Mangrove Estuarine Forests
- Leichhardt Ward – Gulgadya (Grass Tree)
Sandstone Slopes Forest and Woodland
- Ashfield Ward – Djarrawunang (Magpie)
Sydney Turpetine Ironbark Forest
- Stanmore Ward – Damun (Port Jackson Fig)
Sydney Turpetine Ironbark Forest
- Marrickville Ward – Midjuburi (Lillypilly)
Coastal Sandstone Foreshores
Forest/Estuarine Swamp Oak Forest



Summary

This guideline provides information and guidance to the community in relation to Verge Gardens and Adopt-a-Spot within the Inner West local government area and the opportunities for biodiversity improvements within community spaces.

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1. Purpose

The purpose of the Guidelines is to provide a framework for residents wanting to plant and care for gardens on verges of the Inner West or Adopt-a-Spot in a park or in a space which Council manages which is not a residential street verge or community garden.

This Policy recognises the needs of the community by encouraging appropriate planting of verge gardens to contribute to the ecological health, biodiversity, and liveability of the Inner West and balances the need to manage public land in a way that does not jeopardise public safety, reduce access, or interfere with infrastructure and essential services and sets out the requirements for verge gardens to be a high standard of finish to reduce potential conflict between neighbours.

2. Scope

The guidelines apply to all Inner West residents currently, or proposing to, maintain a Verge Garden or an Adopt-a-Spot area. It applies to verges located on Council land immediately in front of, or immediately adjoining single dwellings or multi-unit dwellings in residential areas. Adopt-a-Spot applies to pockets of land which Council manages including within parks. It outlines the approval and ongoing requirements for community participation in the Verge Garden and Adopt-a-Spot program.

3. Definitions

Definitions	Within the scope of these guidelines
Adopt-a-Spot	An area of Council land where a community group, school or individuals agree to a Site Action Plan developed with Council support to enhance and take care of an area of Council land.
Living Streets	Living Streets is the preferred name for the Verge Garden program as voted for by the residents of the Inner West.
Registration	Council provides public liability for verge gardeners that are registered and are following the requirements outlined in the Verge Garden and Adopt-a-Spot Policy and these guidelines. Council does not provide personal accident insurance. Residents must fill in an online application and receive written approval from Council before starting to verge garden.

Vegetation Communities	Identify and describe recurring patterns of native plant species, including combinations of trees, shrubs and/or ground cover plants, in relation to environmental conditions of the place.
Verge	A verge is the area of land located between a street kerb and the boundary of an adjoining property but not including the pedestrian walkway.
Verge garden	gardens (including plants, soil, leaf litter and associated animal life such as insects) established at ground level by residents on the Council-owned verge (road reserve) adjoining the resident's home.
Definitions	Outside the scope of these guidelines
Bushcare sites	Land / Natural Areas that are maintained, regenerated, revegetated, or restored with native plantings to improve biodiversity and habitat in the Inner West, often with the help of resident volunteers.
Council managed Natural Areas	Land (including foreshores and waterways) that is being actively managed to promote native plant growth and improve biodiversity habitats in the Inner West. This is done with the help of paid contractors and supported by the Council Native Plant Nurseries.
Creek lines	Existing natural drainage lines and sections of smaller waterways which may not be always "running with water" but are an important part of our river network.
Community garden	Community-managed spaces for non-commercial food growing and other gardening activities that are accessible to and for the benefit of the local community.
In-road tree pits	Cut-out sections in road carriageways specifically for street trees to grow (different to those found in the footpath).
Local Area Traffic Management devices (LATMs)	Physical measures to control and calm traffic movements in our local streets such as speed humps and pedestrian refuge islands.
Non-residential premises	Any buildings other than those which have a formal approval for people to live in them.
Rain gardens	Water Sensitive Urban Design (W.S.U.D) are vegetated drainage systems designed and built by Council to recreate natural water flows across the landscape.
Remnant vegetation	Patches and pockets of native trees, shrubs and grasses still left intact after land clearing and other environmental damage. In areas where there has been a lot of urban development, like the Inner West, these areas are highly valuable for conservation and habitat values.

Introduction

Council's Verge Garden program provides an opportunity for residents to garden on the Council owned verge immediately in front of, or immediately adjacent to, their property, unit or apartment, and on land where Council has agreed to an Adopt-a-Spot program.

Increasing the diversity of plants on verges and providing space for residents to garden has a range of environmental and social benefits.

Verge gardening is one of the many urban greening and gardening programs that Inner West residents can get involved in. These programs help improve biodiversity corridors, address climate change impacts such as urban heat and make the Inner West a better place. These guidelines have been developed to assist residents create and maintain verge gardens while maintaining the safety and wellbeing of other community members.

See over the
page for
available
programs

Urban greening & gardening programs



Community Gardens

Grow food together on public land. innerwest.nsw.gov.au/CommunityGardens



Community Native Nurseries

Buy local native plants or volunteer at a nursery. innerwest.nsw.gov.au/CommunityNurseries



Nature for Backyards

Plan, create and maintain a native garden in your yard, courtyard or balcony. innerwest.nsw.gov.au/NatureForBackyards



Water sensitive design on your property

Learn how to design your garden to mimic natural water systems. innerwest.nsw.gov.au/watersensitivedesign



Natural Areas

21 hectares of local native understorey plantings. Become a bushcare volunteer to help Council look after these areas. innerwest.nsw.gov.au/bushcareprograms



Public Trees

Council looks after 74,000 trees on public land and plants more every year. Find out more and request a street tree. innerwest.nsw.gov.au/StreetTrees



Compost Collective

For residents wanting to compost together. innerwest.nsw.gov.au/CompostCollective



Food waste avoidance

Composting and worm farm programs. innerwest.nsw.gov.au/Composting

Gardening on the verge

Footpaths and verges are important areas of public land used for a variety of purposes by different members of the community. Verges are spaces for important underground infrastructure such as electricity and internet cables and stormwater pipes. They provide a place for residents to have their rubbish collected from, refuge for pedestrians crossing the road and access for people getting in and out of parked cars. Verges also provide sight lines for motorists to see pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicles at intersections.

Gardening in a multi-purpose public space means that verge gardens can be prone to damage from foot traffic, emergency works or vandalism. Safety and access for people of all abilities as well as access to infrastructure must be prioritised. Council has a duty of care to ensure public safety, accessibility and essential public infrastructure and services are not jeopardised. These guidelines help residents to ensure verge gardens are safe, sustainable and that verges remain accessible by all users.

Unsuitable locations for verge gardens

Every verge is unique in its layout and user needs. Council retains the right to determine additional site-specific requirements. Not all verges are suitable for verge gardens. Written Council approval is required before commencing gardening on the verge.

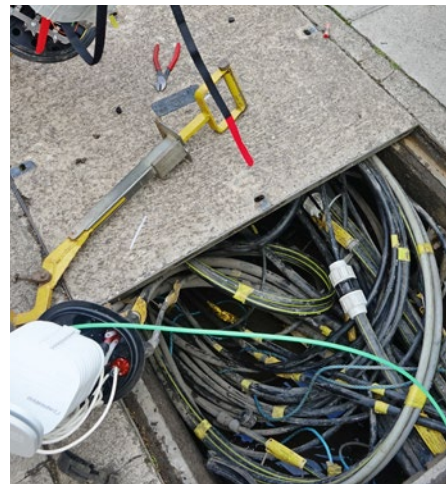
Unsuitable locations include:

1. Lanes

Gardening in lanes is often not permitted due to limited space, safety issues and multiple conflicting uses. If you wish to garden in a lane please submit an application noting it is for a lane and a Council officer will be in touch to discuss suitability.

2. Pedestrians and traffic facilities

Gardening is not permitted within the no stopping zones and/or parking restrictions, traffic lights, intersection,



Various uses of verges



pedestrian crossings, refuge, or other pedestrian facilities.

Verge gardener responsibilities

- Read and meet requirements in the verge garden policy and guidelines.
- Complete application and await approval before commencing gardening on the verge.
- Maintain safe and easy access for pedestrians, Council staff and other service providers at all times.
- Accept that a garden on public land is prone to unpredictable damage and impacts by members of the public (e.g. trampling, vandalism and theft) and service providers undertaking works and maintenance to ensure essential public services are maintained.
- Accept personal responsibility for the risks inherent with working near the road and undertake work in a way that minimises risks to safety of yourself and others.

- Check for services (Dial Before You Dig), prepare the ground, supply plants, mulch and other materials. Council can provide some local native plants to get your started.
- No planting, pruning, removal or damage of trees. Requests for new or replacement street trees can be made at innerwest.nsw.gov.au/StreetTrees
- Re-establish the verge garden and cover the costs if it's impacted by utility companies, Council works or other government agencies or vandalism. Infrastructure works maybe required at any time and without notice to ensure essential services to the community. Notice will be given when possible.

Good Neighbour policy

Council is committed to creating a sense of community and encouraging neighbours to communicate with each other. Where the verge area of your proposed verge garden is adjacent to multiple dwellings, single dwellings or any other neighbour, it is best to inform your neighbours about your plans to create a verge garden.

Planning a successful verge garden

Planning is required to ensure the verge garden meets safety and access requirements for all users whilst achieving other objectives such as increased biodiversity. Follow the guidance in this document to ensure you meet all requirements so your verge is compliant.

1. Consultation and permission

- Talk to residents of neighbouring properties about your proposed verge garden.
- If applying for a verge garden adjoining a multi-unit dwelling you must get approval from strata. A letter from the strata with the common seal stamp must be submitted with your application.



- If applying for a verge garden adjoining a single dwelling as a rental tenant you must get approval from the owner of the property. A letter from the owner must be submitted with your application.
- Check for services. Lodge an enquiry with 'Dial Before You Dig' either online at www.byda.com.au or by calling 1100 to locate underground services (e.g., water, gas) and confirm that there are no underground pipes or cables that will be impacted by the garden. This is very important as service lines are sometimes only a few centimetres under the ground.

2. Application to council

- Before starting a verge garden, residents must register their proposed verge garden via Council's web site innerwest.nsw.gov.au/VergeGardens.
- Once you receive written approval you can begin gardening.

3. Design

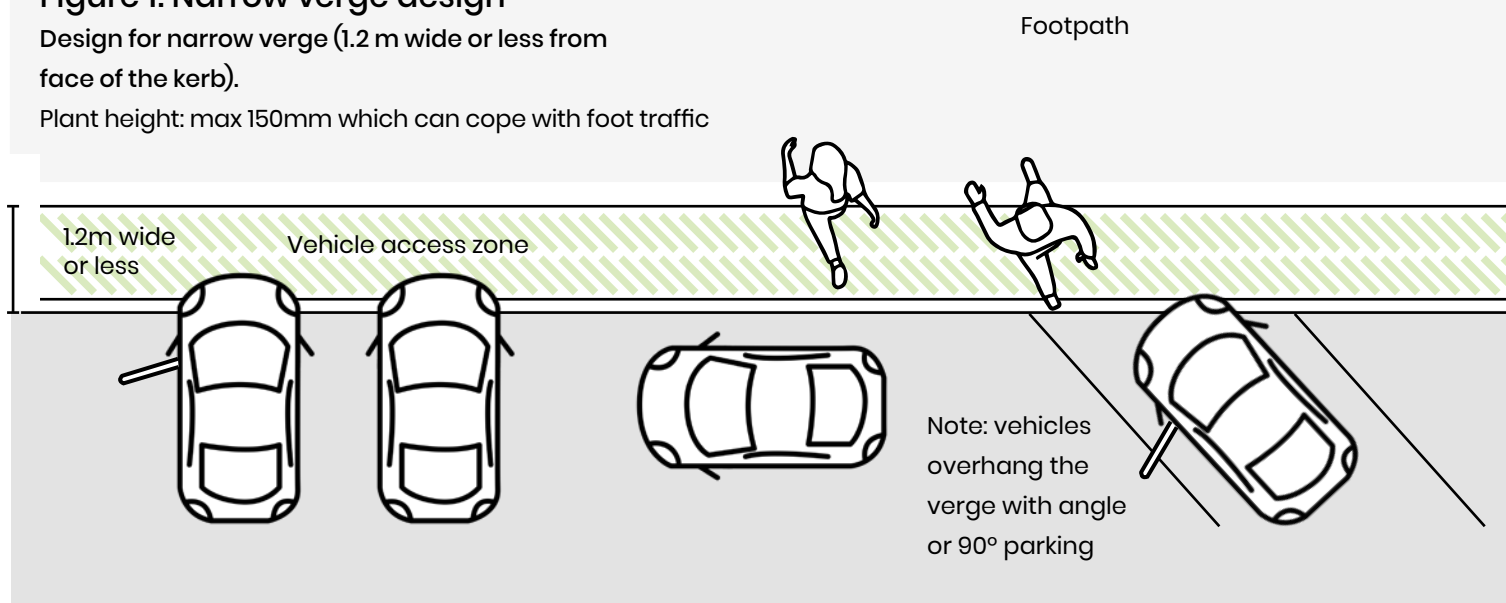
The following practical and essential design elements help to ensure a safe and accessible verge for all users.

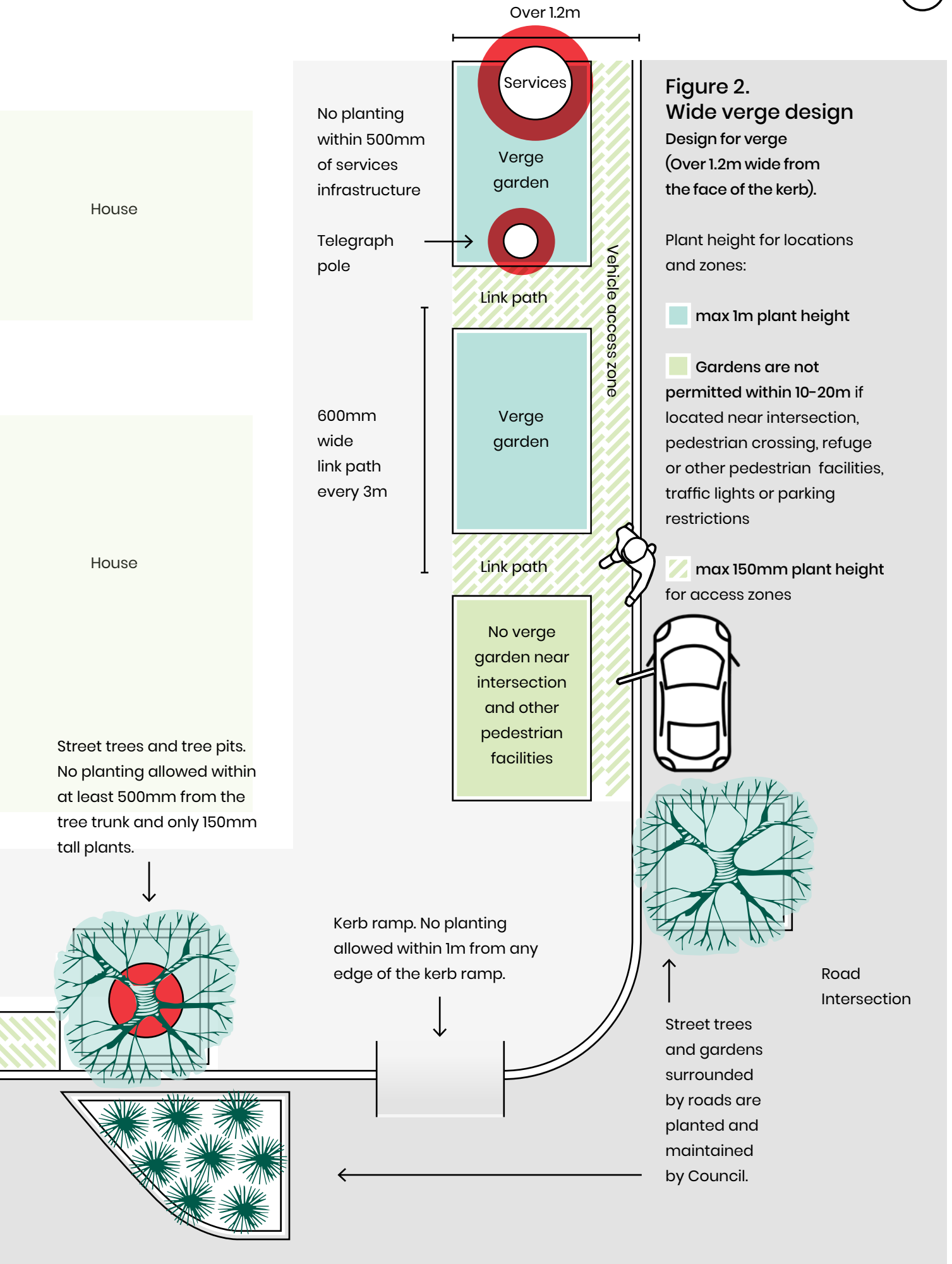
- Refer to figure 1 or figure 2 to determine which design suits your verge.
 - Draw a rough plan and include access zones, infrastructure and area for rubbish bins and collection as set out below.
 - Access Zones – set aside clearance areas for the following uses:
 - Residents putting bins out and collection by trucks
 - Pedestrian getting in and out of vehicles (vehicle access zones), and opening doors and boots of parked cars – 600mm is required from the face of the kerb for wide verges (figure 2) or 1.2m for narrow verges (see figure 1)
 - Pedestrians crossing the garden (link path) to access the road, footpath and vehicles. There must be at least one 600mm wide link path across the verge garden every 3 metres for this purpose.
 - Keep it simple and safe
 - Raised garden beds, stakes, fencing, rocks, sculptures, pots, ornaments, all above ground edging, above or below ground compost and irrigation systems are not permitted.
 - The only edging allowed is plants or mulch edging.
- Gardens are not permitted adjacent to mobility parking spaces and/or within 2m either side of the mobility parking space signage.
 - Accessing infrastructure. Pits, poles and other service infrastructure must not be covered by soil, mulch or plantings and must remain accessible by not planting within 500mm.

Figure 1. Narrow verge design

Design for narrow verge (1.2 m wide or less from face of the kerb).

Plant height: max 150mm which can cope with foot traffic





4. Plant selection

Drought hardy local native plants are recommended. They are low maintenance as they have evolved under local conditions and are the best choice for native wildlife.

Select plants that are able to cope with challenging conditions, including being walked on, soil erosion from stormwater and/or other causes.

Keep in mind that plants and/or whole verge gardens may need to be mowed or removed to maintain essential public services, for infrastructure construction and maintenance. Choose plants that can tolerate mowing, can be transplanted and are inexpensive to replace.

Figure 4. Plant height for specific verge types

Verge location, size or use	Maximum plant height
Access zones – vehicle access zone & link path	150mm that cope with foot traffic
Narrow verge – 1.2m wide or less	150mm that cope with foot traffic
Intersections, pedestrian crossings, refuge or other pedestrian facilities, traffic lights or stop signs	no verge gardening permitted within 10–20 metres
Wide verge – Over 1.2m wide	1 metre when mature
Service infrastructure	no planting within 500mm

What NOT to plant:

- Plants that are invasive (native and non-native species) and environmental weeds. Search by species at <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/>
- Plants with sharp edges and thorns, and which drop fruit.

See recommended species list and resource list at the end of this document for further guidance on suitable species and where to get them.



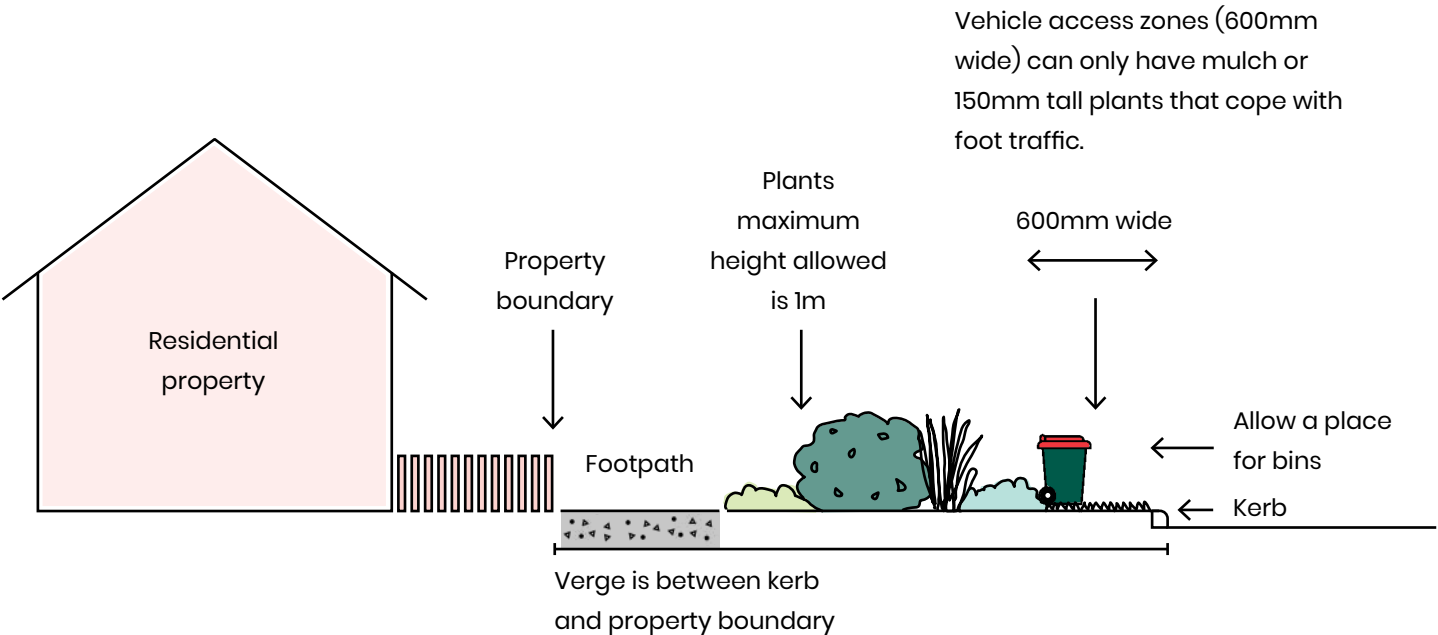
Food growing

Growing plants for food is not permitted due to the risks associated with soil contamination.

If you have an interest in growing food plants on public land, it's best to find a community garden in your local area at innerwest.nsw.gov.au/CommunityGardens



Figure 3. Cross section of a wide verge



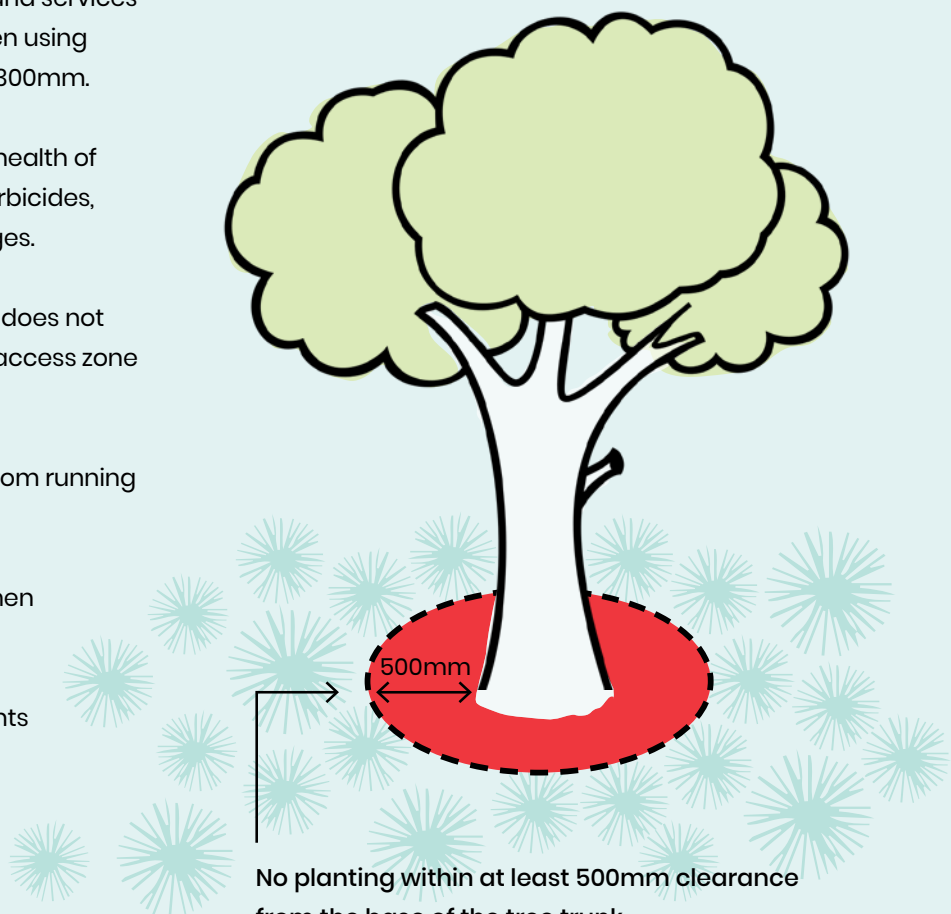
5. Establishment and maintenance

Registering your verge garden with Council

By registering your verge garden, you are formally declaring that your proposed verge garden will comply with Council's Guidelines and policy. Registration is free.

Council does not issue permits for verge gardens but will assess your application and conduct a site visit. It is important to remember, not all verges are suitable for verge gardens. Safety and accessibility are priorities. All verge gardens will be inspected regularly for compliance. Where requested and subject to availability Council will provide a maximum of 20 tube stock plants to assist with the establishment of a verge garden. Additional plants can be purchased from Council's nursey subject to availability.

- a. When working on a verge garden ensure the site is safe for you and all pedestrians. Do not leave tools on the footpath.
- b. To prevent unwanted damage to underground services or infrastructure, digging must be undertaken using hand tools with excavation no deeper than 300mm.
- c. To ensure public safety, and the safety and health of verge gardeners residents are not to use herbicides, pesticides or other chemicals on public verges.
- d. Vegetation must be maintained to ensure it does not spill onto or impact the use of the footpath, access zone or road kerb.
- e. Prevent water, soil, mulch or any materials from running off onto the road, footpath or drain by:
 - checking the weather forecast for rain when establishing the garden.
 - placing clumping or rhizome forming plants around the boundary of the verge.
- f. Do the following to avoid damage to trees
 - Keep at least 500mm clearance around the tree trunk. Allow greater clearances for larger trees.
 - Use hand tools to carefully probe the soil surface, find void spaces around tree roots that allow for plantings. Do not damage any roots that are uncovered.
 - Use small plants such as seedlings and tube stock to avoid the need to dig large holes.
 - Where extensive tree roots are present choose plants with shallow root systems such as groundcovers, native grasses, bulbs and ferns.
 - Do not mound soil or organic matter against the tree trunk or on top of roots as this is not good for tree health.



No planting within at least 500mm clearance from the base of the tree trunk.
Allow greater clearance for larger trees.

Important general information

1. Compliance with Verge Garden and Adopt-a-Spot Policy 2023

Verge gardeners may be asked to address safety, weed infestation and access issues as outlined in the Verge Garden and Adopt-a-Spot Policy 2023. Council will notify the resident in writing and request compliance within 14 days of the notice.

If Council is notified that a verge garden has been established without Council approval, Council will issue a letter to the resident requesting submission of a formal application within 14 days of Council notice.

After 14 days, Council staff may take necessary action for the garden to comply including, but not limited to, trimming and removing vegetation or any other items that do not meet requirements or otherwise pose a risk to public access and safety. This may include removing all plants and any other items and returning the verge to lawn. Permission for the resident to garden on the verge may also be withdrawn.

In cases where there is a high risk to public safety Council may remove items without any notice. Council will not be liable for reimbursing residents for items removed.

2. Moving

Advise Council if you plan to move away or no longer wish to maintain the verge garden. Council may return the verge to lawn if the resident is no longer able to maintain the garden.

3. Insurance

Council provides public liability insurance for verge gardeners that are registered and are following the requirements outlined in the Verge Garden and Adopt-a-Spot Policy and these guidelines. Council does not provide personal accident insurance.

Examples of non-compliant verge gardens



Left: This verge has the following non-compliant issues:

- plants taller than 1m high blocking sight lines.
- plants blocking the vehicle access zone.



Above: This verge has the following non-compliant issue:

- includes hard landscaping such as raised edging which may cause trip hazard.



4. Useful resources

- Council's Verge Gardening Program – General guidance and information about verge gardens – [innerwest.nsw.gov.au/Verge Gardens](http://innerwest.nsw.gov.au/VergeGardens)
- Nature for Backyards – Gardening with natives including planting and watering instructions and places to buy local native plants. Please note that not all of the species listed in the guide are suitable for verges – innerwest.nsw.gov.au/NatureForBackyards
- Council's Community Native Nurseries – Buy local native plants and collect free mulch – innerwest.nsw.gov.au/CommunityNurseries
- Community Justice Centre – help to resolve neighbour disputes – https://www.cjc.justice.nsw.gov.au/Pages/cjc_whatis_mediation/com_justice_neighbours.aspx

Contact

Council's verge garden officer on 9392 5525 or submit a request at innerwest.nsw.gov.au/GetItDone

Adopt-a-Spot Program

Council's Adopt-a-Spot program permits community groups, schools, businesses and individuals to enhance and take care of a nominated area of Council managed land which is not classified as a verge garden or a community garden.

Adopt-a-Spot activities can include:

- Planting
- Weeding
- Gardening
- Habitat creation
- Wildlife watching
- Citizen Science

Adopt-a-Spot key principles

Inner West Council will support Adopt-a-Spot projects with community volunteers which demonstrate the following key principles:

- Working in partnerships for the benefit of the community and environment.
- Projects that strengthen the quality and resilience of our green spaces.
- Local stewardship of our Parks and open space areas.
- Projects which comply with statutory and legal requirements, such as Park Plans of Management.
- Projects that are equitable and inclusive.
- Encourage volunteers to work under the umbrella of an existing or newly formed group.
- Support and enable eco-action in public conservation

- Contribute to Citizen Science projects, data collection and monitoring aligned with the work of Council.

Registering an Adopt-a-Spot garden with Council

Before commencing an Adopt-a-Spot garden, residents must register their proposed Adopt-a-Spot idea and meet with Council's Sustainable Streets Officer to discuss the proposal.

Adopt-a-Spot role of Council

Inner West Council values community volunteers and the work that they undertake. To help volunteers in this work, Council will:

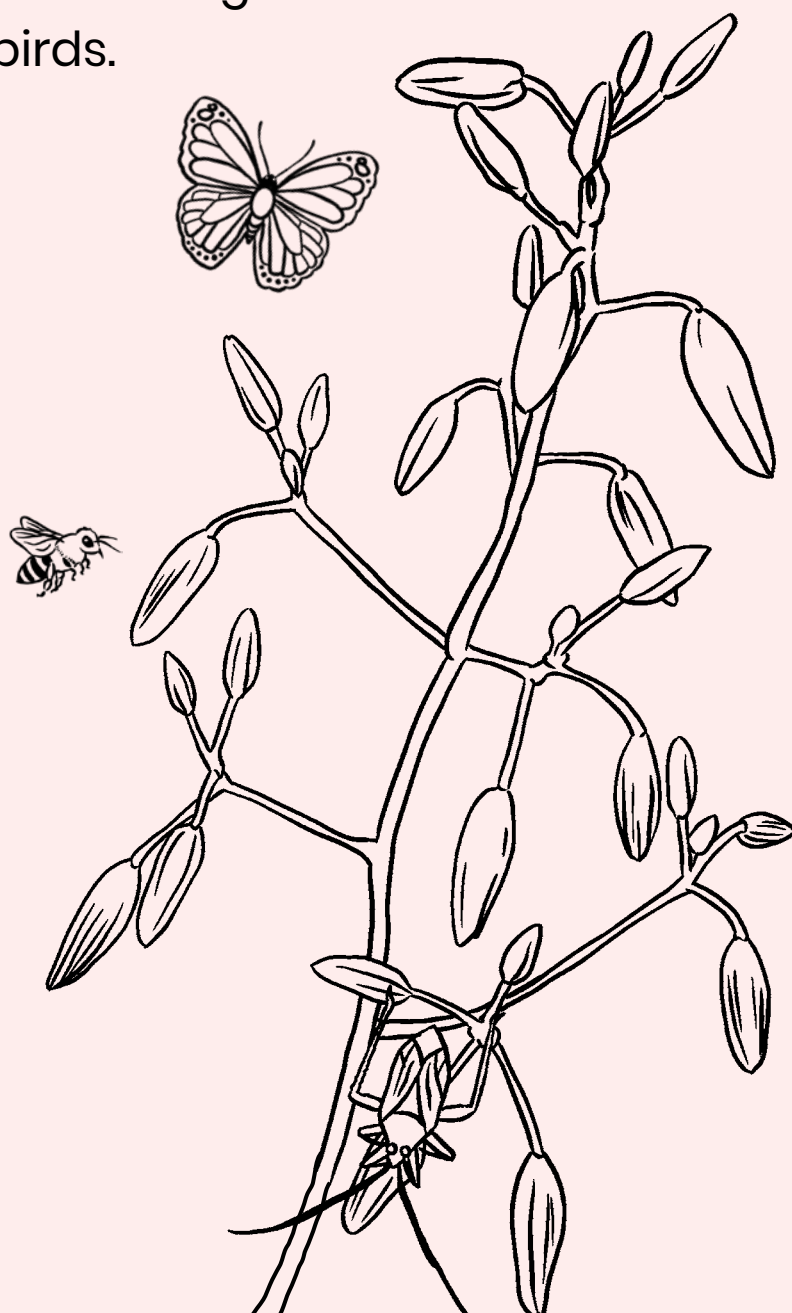
- Provide assistance in producing a site action plan
- Identify suitable areas subject to agreement by Council's Sustainable Streets officer
- Provide signage acknowledging that the site is maintained by community volunteers and is a registered Adopt-a-Spot area.
- Keep a register of Adopt-a-Spot location on its web site.
- Provide local provenance tube stock from Council's Community Native Nursery, a maximum of 20 tube plants to assist with the establishment of an Adopt-a-Spot site. Additional plants can be purchased from Council's nursery subject to availability.

Adopt-a-Spot conditions of use

The conditions of use as they also relate to verge gardens in this policy are applicable to Adopt-a-Spot locations agreed to by Council. This includes conditions of use and public liability insurance coverage.

Recommended Plant List

Verges are challenging environments, the plants on this list are local native species that have evolved over thousands of years to thrive in local conditions. Understanding and using these native plants will help to build a resilient, low maintenance verge garden and create a sense of place, unique to the Inner West. These plants are best for local wildlife including beneficial insects, butterflies and birds.



Groundcovers and grasses

The following plants are perfect to create a grassy meadow or vibrant wildflower verge. Mix up your heights from a mass of low ground hugging plants in the access zone along the kerb and work your way up to taller flowering shrubs or taller grass in the middle of the verge.

Australian Basket Grass (*Oplismenus aemulus*)

H: 30cm x W: 50cm

Creeping and matting grass which grows in partial shade or in full sun if soil is moist. Flower spikes to 30 cm. Has brown hairy 'beard'. Host plant for butterflies.



Bluebell (*Wahlenbergia gracilis*) H:30cm

A slender tufted perennial with sky blue flowers throughout the year.



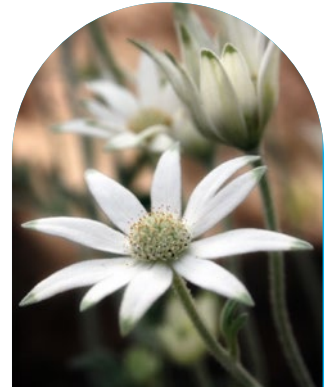
Blue flax lily (*Dianella caerulea*) H:75cm

Mat forming, prefers fertile soils, perfect as an edging plant or on sloped verges as it can help control erosion. Flowers in Spring and has a long flower spike with small blue flowers which turn into purple/blue berries. Birds love to eat the berries. Attracts butterflies, provides shelter for animals.

Bulbine (*Bulbine bulbosa*)

H:75cm x W:50cm

Clumping perennial, prefers moist well drained soil. Attracts Bees, butterflies and other insects.



Cranesbill (*Geranium homeanum*)

H: 70cm x W: 1m

A slender sprawling herb with small pale pink flowers in Spring and Summer. Attracts bees and butterflies.

Cut-Leafed Daisy (*Brachycome multifida*)

H:45cm

A matting growth habit with foliage which is fine and deeply divided. The flowers are mauve, pink or white. It flowers early to Mid-Winter but flowers may appear throughout the year.

Fan flower (*Scaevola albida*) H:30cm

A sprawling herbaceous scrambler with bluish mauve flowers in Spring and Summer. Attracts butterflies.

Flannel flower (*Actinotis helianthi*) H: 1m x 50cm

Perennial shrub which likes well drained soil in full sun to partial shade. It is short lived but has stunning felt like white flowers and grey foliage. It has relatively brittle stems and so requires protection from strong winds to avoid branch breakage. Attracts bees, butterflies and other insects.

Barbwire grass (*Cymbopogon refractus*)

H: 1m

Tufted grass with tall wiry stems and greyish foliage. Its inflorescence resembles the barbs of barbed wire. Attracts butterflies and provides shelter for animals including frogs, birds and mammals.



Hedgehog grass
(*Echinopogon caespitosus*) H: 50cm
With a bristly round seed head. Full sun to part or dappled shade, all soils. Attracts butterflies.

Harsh fern (*Hypolepis muelleri*) H: 1m x 2.0m
A creeping fern with green fronds. Despite the common name, the fronds are soft to touch. Prefers moist soil in part shade or shady site.

Kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*)
H: 1m x W: 50cm
Erect perennial native tussock with narrow green or grey green leaves. Glossy, rust coloured spikelets on slightly arching stems from September to February. Adaptable to a range of conditions. Attracts butterflies and birds eat the seeds

Knobby club rush (*Ficinia nodosa*) H: 1m

A clumping, tufted sedge with creeping rhizomes from which new stems arise and globular seed heads 1.5 cm across towards the tips of the foliage. Flowering occurs Mid-Spring to early Summer. Prefers moist soil in either full sun or part shade.

Maidenhair fern
(*Adiantum aethiopicum*)
H: 50cm

A delicate fern for damp and shady positions with no traffic. It spreads by underground rhizomes.

Native bluebell
(*Wahlenbergia gracilis*)
H: 80cm

A slender tufted herb with sky-blue flowers in Spring and Summer.



Pale vanilla lily
(*Arthropodium milleflorum*) H: 60cm

A tufted grass-like herb with small white or pale pink and purple flowers in November - February.



Pigface (*Carpobrotus glaucescens*)
H: 20cm x W: 2m

A creeping succulent with stunning bright pink flowers in Spring and Summer and glaucous green leaves, preferring well drained soil. Note: it doesn't like being walked on. Provides fleshy fruit for birds.

Pomax (*Pomax umbellata*)
H: 40cm

A spreading plant with soft hairy leaves and small green chandelier like flower arrangement, flowering in Spring and Summer.

Scurvy weed (*Commelina cyanea*) H: 30cm x W: 2m

A trailing native herb with blue flowers and succulent leaves and stems. Perfect for part shade to full shade with damp soil. It dies back in the Winter and takes off in the warm season. Note: it can take over an area and is a perfect choice if you want a mass planting of one plant. Attracts native bees and provides shelter for skinks.

Sickle fern (*Pellaea falcata*)
H: 60cm

A creeping fern with upright green fronds which prefers damp soil or shade to part shade.

Slender knotweed
(*Persicaria decipiens*)
H: 60cm x W: 1m

Trailing red stems with small pink flowers from November to June and dies back in drought or Winter. Prefers damp soil, provides shelter and seeds for birds.



Speedwell (*Veronica plebeia*) H: 30cm x W: 2m

Prostrate trailing stoloniferous herb, forming a mat, ideally in moist soil in full sun or shade. Wrinkled dark green triangular leaves and loose clusters of small mauve flowers from September to February.



Wallaby Grass
(*Rytidosperma tenuius*)

H: 80cm

Erect tufted native grass with flattish leaves. Highly tolerant of harsh soils and growing conditions. Provides textural interest and colour. Loose spikes of fluffy, purple flowerheads throughout the year. Should be considered as a lawn alternative as it tolerates mowing and traffic. Provides seeds for birds and attracts butterflies.

Weeping meadow grass
(*Microlaena stipoides*)

H: 30cm - 70cm

A tough native grass with thin green leaves and a distinctive weeping seed head during Spring and Autumn. It will spread by seed if allowed to seed. A perfect grass for part shady or sunny lawn areas or verges. Can be mowed, or left to seed for a grassy meadow look. Attracts butterflies.

Wild Geranium
(*Pelargonium australe*)

H: 50cm x W: 60cm

A native herbaceous perennial, leaves are pale green, hairy with touches of pink, crimson to purple. It flowers from October – March.

Wiry panic (*Entolasia stricta*) H 80cm

A wiry grass usually in an upright spreading tuft with short leaves on long stems.



Yellow buttons
(*Chrysocephalum apiculatum*) H:60cm

A perennial herb with silvery felt leaves and golden yellow flowers. Prefers full sun.

Lawn alternatives

For use in access zones, link paths and edging in your verge garden.

Asiatic Pennywort
(*Centella asiatica*) H: 5cm

A dense mat of glossy leaves with clusters of tiny flowers in November to May. Prefers shade. Provides shelter for skinks.



Kidney weeds (*Dichondra repens*) H: 10cm

A low creeper forming a dense mat with small, dark green kidney-shaped leaves and tiny white flowers. It grows in sunny spots provided it gets water in dry times. Attracts insects and small lizards.

Native Violet (*Viola hederacea*) H: 15cm

Mat forming habitat with kidney shaped leaves and white and purple flowers in Spring and Summer. Prefers moist soil in part to full shade.

Small leaved pennywort
(*Hydrocotyle peduncularis*) H:15cm

A creeping perennial forming a dense mat of ivy-shaped leaves with tiny white flowers in September– February.



White root (*Pratia purpurascens*) H:15cm

A scrambling groundcover with small green toothed leaves with purple colouring underneath. Small white to purple flowers in Spring and Summer, prefers moist soil and part to full shade. Attracts insects.

Zoysia macrantha (*native couch*) H: 25cm

A sand and soil stabiliser and great lawn alternative, requires less watering and less mowing than most other turfs. Excellent Winter colour.

Scramblers

Scramblers are great if mass planted, maybe just one species for a good impact. Most scramblers will climb up anything nearby such as telegraph posts, trees and shrubs so they will require pruning to stop climbing or smothering, overhanging the footpath or invading access zones.

Apple berry (*Billardiera scandens*)

A scrambling plant with slender stems and cream flowers in September – December followed by purple fruit. Provides fruit for birds and plant food for the larvae of native butterflies or moths and a nectar source for adult butterflies.



Native sarsaparilla (*Hardenbergia violacea*)

Fast growing trailing vine with sprays of purple pea flowers from Mid-Winter to Spring. Growing in full sun to part shade position. Butterflies, moths and native bees feed on the nectar from the flowers. All these insects provide a tasty treat for insect eating birds.

Snake vine (*Hibbertia scandens*)

A sprawling climber with large and showy yellow flowers between April – November. Provides fruit for native birds and attracts native bees, beetles and butterflies.

Wombat berry (*Eustrephus latifolius*)

A twining plant but may also occur as a scrambling ground cover, prefers part shade. Flowers are white – purple, drooping with fringed petals.

Shrubs

Ideal for large verges and for planting in the middle of the verge to allow for natural growth and help reduce the need for ongoing pruning, particularly around paths and access zones.



Heath Myrtles (*Baeckea imbricata*) H:1m

A small leaf with white to pinkish flowers in Spring and Summer

Cockspur (*Plectranthus parviflorus*) H:60cm

An erect perennial, with tiny white and blueish purple flowers throughout the year for moist shady verges with no foot traffic. Attracts insects.

Heathy Parrot Pea (*Dillwynia retorta*) H:1m

A fine leaved shrub to 1m high, with yellow and reddish-brown flowers in Spring. Full sun to part or dappled shade, prefers sandy (or improved clay) soils.



Paperbark (*Melaleuca thymifolia*) H:1m

Slender wiry stems and fragrant leaves with cork bark and delicate feathery violet-purple flowers. Prefers damp soil. Attracts butterflies.

Breaches of this Guideline

Breaches of this Guideline may result in an investigation of the alleged breach in line with relevant Council policies including the Code of Conduct.

Any alleged criminal offence or allegation of corrupt conduct will be referred to the relevant external agency.

For further information about verge gardening in the Inner West, visit innerwest.nsw.gov.au/VergeGardens

Administrative Changes

From time-to-time circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made including branding, Council Officer titles or department changes and legislative name or title changes are considered minor in nature and not required to be formally endorsed.

Version Control:

This Policy will be formally reviewed 3 years from the date of adoption or as required.

Governance use only:

Document	Living Streets Verge Garden and Adopt-a-Spot Policy	Uncontrolled Copy When Printed	
Custodian	Senior Manager Environment and Sustainability	Version #	Version 1
Adopted By	Council	ECM Document #	38309965
Next Review Date	October 2026		

Amended by	Changes made	Date Adopted
Environment and Sustainability	New Policy	10 October 2023

INNER WEST

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