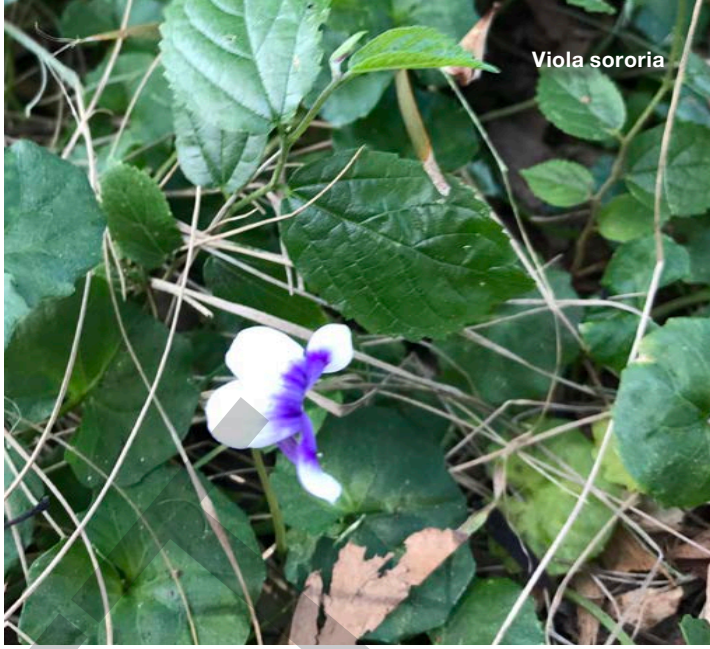
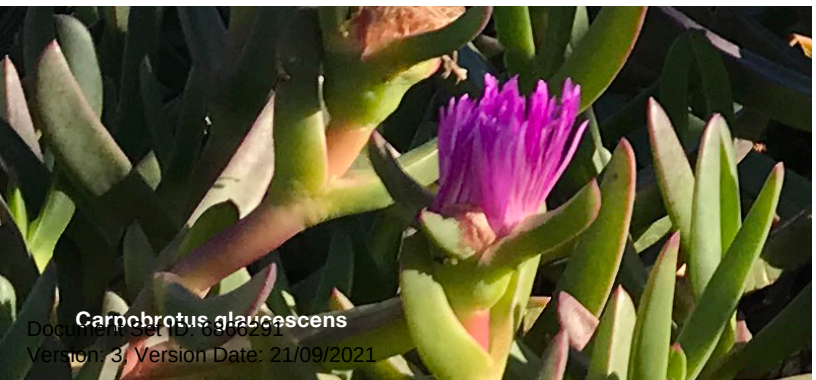


Indigofera australis



Viola sororia

Nature Strip Planting Guidelines



Carpobrotus glaucescens

DRAFT

Document Set ID: 6866251
Version: 3, Version Date: 21/09/2021

City of Canada Bay

City of Canada Bay

Contents

About these Guidelines 2

Benefits of Nature Strip Planting 3

Definitions 3

Links to other Council strategies and policies 4

Essential things to consider before you start 4

What to do to be approved!. 6

Planter Boxes 6

Planter Boxes must meet the following requirements: 8

Public Liability 9

What should you plant? 9

Check in with neighbours 10

Safety during planting 10

Maintenance 10

Examples of Non-Compliant Nature Strip Gardens 11

Complaints Management. 12

Submitting the Checklist – Appendix A 12

About these Guidelines

The City of Canada Bay is committed to improving the sustainability of our local government area. Recognising the impacts of climate change and drought on gardening and landscaping, our Nature Strip Policy and Guidelines allows residents to have a safe and sustainable approach to gardening on nature strips. Approval for planting is granted under the Nature Strip Policy, and non-compliance is enforced under the Local Government Act 1993 and the Roads Act 1993. Council has a duty of care to ensure public safety and access are not jeopardised. Residents gardening on public land also need to be aware of, and accept personal responsibility for the risks inherent with working on the road reserve. The footpath is public land and all aspects of safety must be considered before constructing a garden.



Female Superb Fairywren

DRAFT

Document Set ID: 6866291
Version: 3, Version Date: 21/09/2021



Callistemon Little John

DRAFT

Benefits of Nature Strip Planting

Planted nature strips have a number of benefits to the local environment and wider community. Planting with drought tolerant turf or appropriate native plant species has a number of direct benefits to local fauna, waterways, and pollution levels. The major benefits of planted nature strips are that they:

- Enhance biodiversity, and creation of ecological corridors for fauna (birds, reptiles and insects);
- Provide protective habitat for smaller birds and other fauna from competing larger exotic species;
- Assist storm water infiltration and pollution (rainwater that drains off roofs, roads and buildings and flows into gutters, waterways and eventually groundwater, oceans and rivers);
- Improve streetscape amenity and softening of hard surfaces such as roads, footpaths and driveway paving, fences and building;
- Support human health and wellbeing; and
- Help to build and enhance neighbourhood identity, contribute positively to local streetscape, foster feeling of pride and encourage other residents to maintain their gardens and nature strip areas.

Definitions

a) **Nature strip:** The nature strip is the Council owned land between the private property boundary and the road. This area may be grassed and/or contain street trees, footpaths, road and or parking signs, driveways, street furniture and utility services.

b) **Nature strip garden:** Nature strip gardens refer to plantings installed by residents at ground level in their owned or leased property. Residents are required to comply with guidelines to ensure that the garden meets the policy objectives, including the submission of a checklist and photographs to Council after completing the installation of a nature strip garden.

c) **Laneway gardens:** Laneway gardens refer to plantings within a laneway between the road edge or kerb and the adjacent fence or boundary. If a resident is considering the installation of a laneway garden, they will need to contact Council to discuss their proposal and planting options.

d) **Planter boxes:** Planter boxes refers to raised structures, in which plants can be grown. In certain circumstances, planter boxes may be installed by the resident on the nature strip in front of their owned or leased property. These structures can have an impact on road users and therefore require an approval process prior to commencing installation of a planter box.

The policy criteria outlines that any planting on the nature strip must respect other users of the footpath, while also maintaining access and amenity.

Document Set ID: 6866291
Version: 3, Version Date: 21/09/2021

City of Canada Bay

Links to other Council strategies and policies

The Nature Strip Policy and Guidelines supports Council's Environmental Strategy, which has four key themes; connected to nature, resilient City, resource efficient community, and leading by example. The Nature Strip Policy aims to encourage and support residents to 'green' the front of their property boundary by planting native resilient species to help support local biodiversity and to help your house and street look great.

The Environmental Strategy has a number of targets which are relevant to this policy.

Biodiversity targets:

- **No net decrease in native fauna species**
- **No decrease in native plant species**

Urban canopy targets:

- **Increase tree canopy cover from 18% across the City to 25% by 2040**


Acacia myrtifolia

Essential things to consider before you start

A little preplanning can ensure that planting of the nature strip is done to a high standard of safety, access, and finish.

Make sure the area to be planted is on the Council owned land adjacent to the public footpath outside your property or the nature strip is the Council owned land between the private property boundary and the road.

Are the pipes and service lines underground?

To check the location of underground services (water, gas, NBN, and telephone) call 'Dial Before You Dig' (on 1100 or visit their website) to see if there are any utility services beneath your footpath.

By contacting **'Dial Before You Dig'** residents will receive a referral notice and confirmation of services from the utilities company within the area of request free of charge. Digging into a gas pipe or an electrical cable can be a fatal mistake. Individuals are also liable for any damage to underground networks. If you are unclear on how to read the maps received, contact the service network provider that has issued the maps. Residents will need to attach documentation received from 'Dial before You Dig' to the approval for planting checklist.

Planting is not advised on 'top' of services. Access to underground service should be maintained at all times. No mechanised tools and equipment are permitted.

Planting and digging depth should be a maximum of 40cm deep. Services can be located within this soil depth, so it is essential to check with Dial Before You Dig prior to works commencing.


Grevillea sericea

DRAFT

Document Set ID: [illegible]
Version: 3, Version Date: 31/05/2024

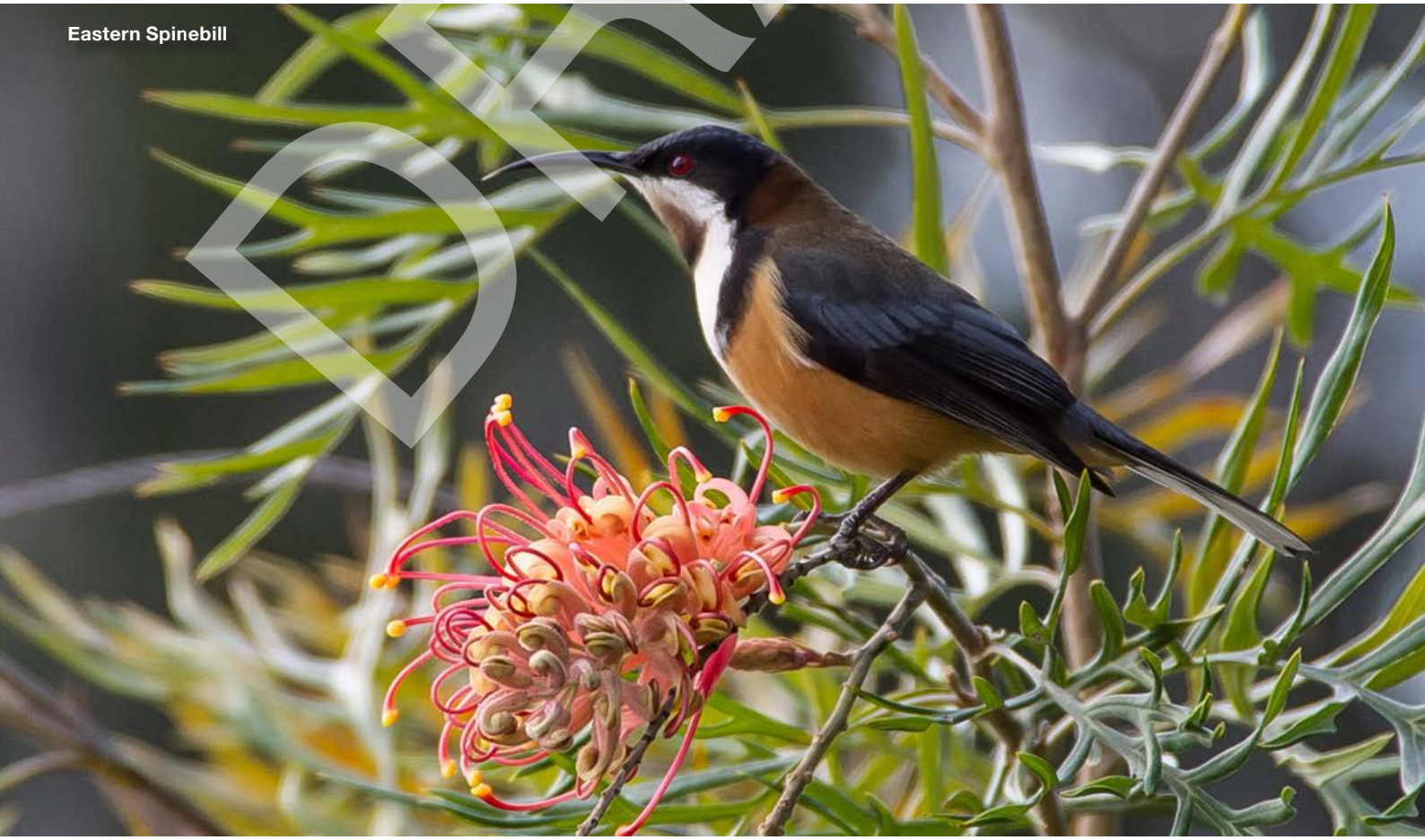
Know your site

The nature strips within City of Canada Bay Local Government Area are diverse and offer different opportunities and constraints to residents who are considering planting on their nature strip. In areas close to the water the soil tends to be sandy, while further away from the water the soils are more clay based. Appendix E Native Plants Facts Sheet indicates the soil type and landscape uses as well as the plant characteristics for a variety of native plants. Appendix F - Geology and Soils Map shows the different type of soils throughout Canada Bay. This can help guide what native plants are suitable to grow in these areas.

You are responsible for preparing the ground, supplying the plants, and meeting any associated costs. Residents assuming responsibility for the care of nature strip gardens must ensure they are kept safe, clean, healthy and in an attractive condition free of disease, foreign matter, dead plant material and hazards.

Be prepared to commit some time and effort and only plant what you know you can continue to maintain. Plants that are low maintenance, drought resistant, and hardy are easier to look after. Better to plant out a small area well than to plant out a larger area poorly.





Eastern Spinebill

DRAFT

City of Canada Bay

What to do to be approved!

1. If the nature strip is located in a Heritage Conservation Area, your nature strip garden will need approval from Council's Heritage Officer. You can determine if you are in a Heritage Conservation Area by viewing the maps in the **City of Canada Bay Development Control Plan - Appendix 1 Conservation Areas** (a document attached to the Control Plan).

2. Your nature strip garden needs to be positioned in front of your residential property (not commercial premises), in a way that it does not obstruct access from cars, block footpaths or damage adjacent trees.

3. Plantings must have a minimum 600mm setback from the kerb to allow for car doors to open and people to exit vehicles. Special consideration will be given by Council to areas with a narrow nature strip and where 600mm setback is not possible.

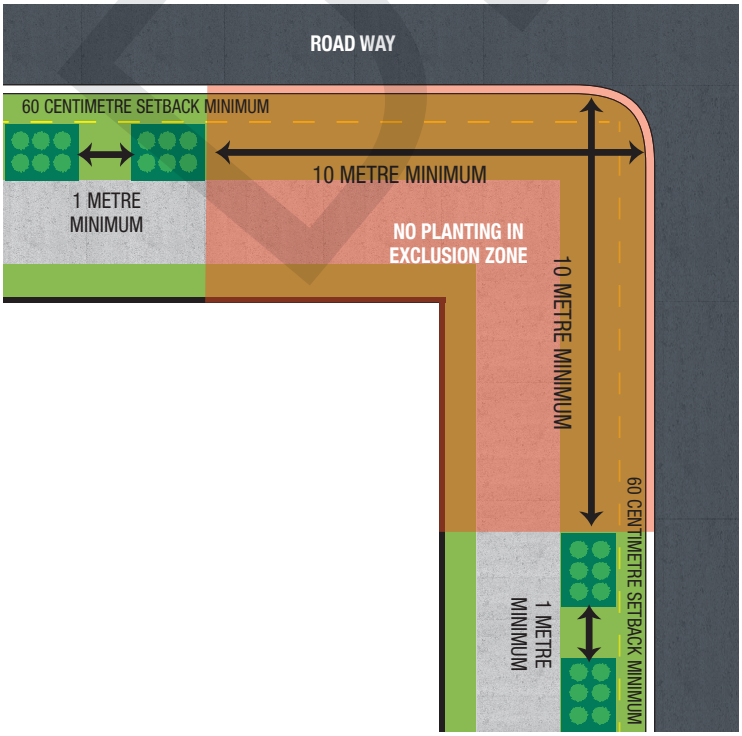
4. Installed plantings are to be maintained at a maximum height of 1m, existing street trees are excluded from this. Plants need to be low growing to ensure they do not interfere with car or pedestrian site lines.

5. Plantings are not permitted adjacent to disabled parking areas. This is to allow enough room to get in and out of vehicles safely.

6. Plantings must not occur within the existing street tree root zone. They must be at a minimum of 2m from the base of any street tree. This is to protect the existing tree from potential damage to its root system. Street trees will remain the responsibility of Council, requests for new or replacement trees should be directed to Council via email council@canadabay.nsw.gov.au. Just put Request for new street tree in the title.

7. Plantings must be greater than 10m in distance from corner kerb blocks, this is to allow road visibility and to maintain a line-of-sight for vehicles using the road.

8. Nature strip planting is not permitted within 15m on the approach side of a bus stop and 5m on the departure side of the bus stop. This is to provide the bus driver with enough clear visible space to use bus stop safely.



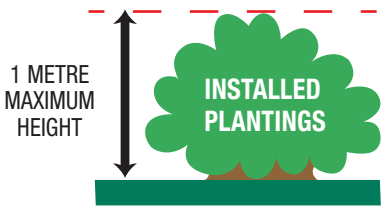


Figure 1: Nature strip planting permitted around corner block

Document Set ID: 6866291
Version: 3, Version Date: 21/09/2021

9. The parking lane shall not be obstructed or reserved. If required, appropriate consent from Council must be granted to temporarily use parking lanes. Footpaths are to remain free of materials and equipment to allow pedestrian access at all times.

10. Plantings must allow pedestrian access across a nature strip (minimum 1m wide clearing). There needs to be enough room to place mobile garbage, recycling and green waste bins. Some areas may not be suitable for nature strip plantings due to the narrowness of the footpath.

11. Nature strip planting is not permitted adjacent to any cycleways. This is to ensure clear line of sight between cyclists, pedestrians and traffic.

12. Hard landscaping elements such as rocks, timber, retaining walls, sculptures or ornaments must not be used. This is to prevent any trip hazards. Planter boxes can be installed in certain situations, for example for a resident with a disability. A special application must be made to Council if planter boxes are to be used.

13. If you are renting the property but still wish to plant a nature strip garden you will need written permission from the owners of the property. The owners will then need to take responsibility for the maintenance, upkeep or removal of the garden if the renter moves out. The council is not responsible for any of these costs.

14. Mulch and soil material must be kept stable, properly contained and stay level to the kerb and path. The nature strip garden design must prevent materials from being displaced or washed onto the road or into the stormwater gutter in a rain event. Recommended treatments include granitic sand and finely ground organic mulch, such as soft fall material. Larger materials such as stones or crushed rock greater than 10mm or chunky woodchips are not to be used.

15. Irrigation systems must not be placed within the nature strip. This is to prevent any trip hazards for pedestrians.

16. Changes to nature strip levels or retaining walls that might interfere with drainage will not be permitted.

17. Using artificial or synthetic grass is not permitted. This can inhibit rainwater soaking into the ground and add to stormwater run-off during heavy rain events. Synthetic grass is very hot in summer and can make the area hotter. The synthetic grass can also be a trip or burn heat hazard.

18. Planting in areas of remnant vegetation, habitat corridors or land identified as having biodiversity significance is not permitted (refer to the **City of Canada Bay Development Control Plan** 21/10/2020, Part C5, D2, D3, D4).

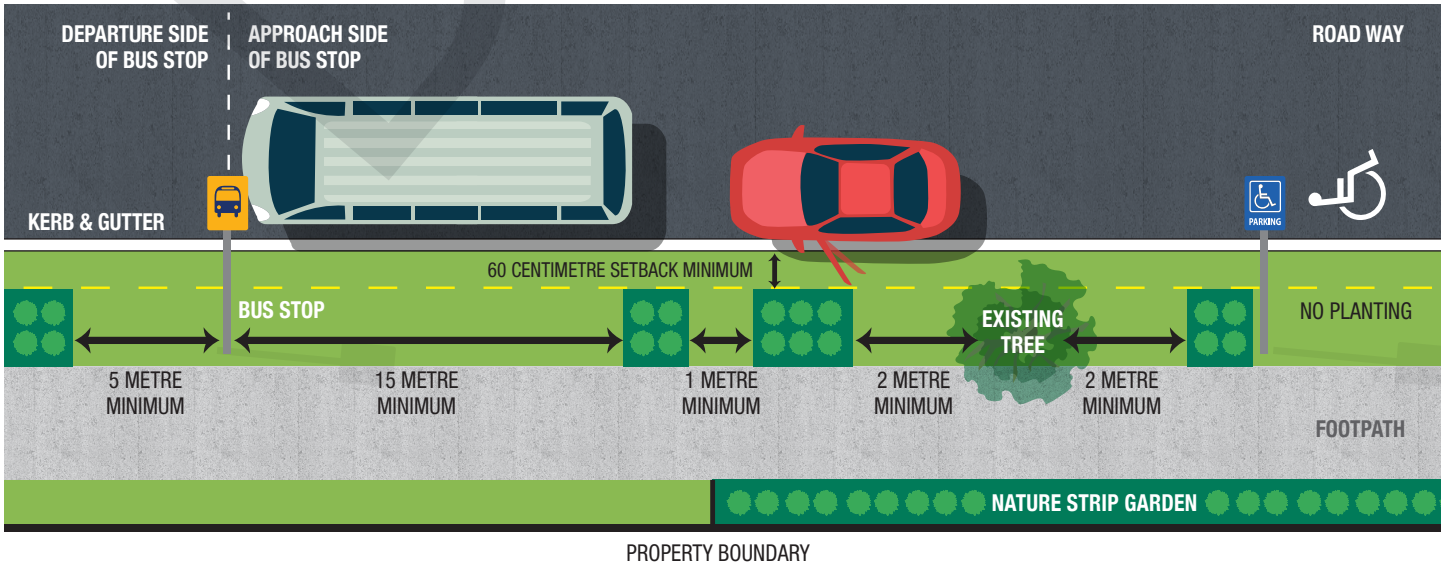


Figure 2: Permitted nature strip planting

DRAFT

City of Canada Bay

Planter Boxes

The Nature Strip Policy permits residents to install planter boxes on the nature strip in certain circumstances, for example a person with disability or a person with mobility issues. Council approval is required prior to installation. The process for approval is as follows::

1. Ensure that the planter box is installed in accordance with the approval.
2. Submit photos of the planter box upon completion.
3. Continue to maintain the planter box to ensure ongoing compliance with the policy and guidelines.
4. Planter boxes are required to be installed on firm level natural surfaces to allow for effective drainage.
5. Do not create access barriers or hazards for pedestrians, road users, neighbouring properties, trees, utilities, and services.
6. Do not impact or damage the footpath or any adjacent property.
7. All planter boxes must have a weed mat or geo-fabric layer at the base to form a separation barrier between the existing site soil and the imported growing medium.
8. The planter box must be free of sharp tops and edges, nails or any overhanging material which may impede the footway or cause injury to pedestrians.
9. Irrigation systems are not permitted. No structures or ornaments are permitted within your planter box.
10. Ensure the planter box is regularly maintained and kept in a presentable condition. Particular attention to Colourbond planter boxes to ensure they are free from rust and any sharp edges.

Planter Boxes must meet the following requirements:

- A clear distance minimum 300mm is to be maintained between the edge of the footpath and the planter box
- Planter boxes are not suitable for nature strips narrower than 2m (excluding the concrete footpath)
- Maintain a minimum one metre of space between your planter box and any driveway edge
- Maximum height of the planter box and the fully-grown plants is one metre

Council only permits two types of planter boxes, which are available to buy.



Figure 3. Approved colourbond planter box

Colourbond Steel Planter

Material and colour	Corrugated steel in neutral colour
Steel edge	Rolled steel safety edge with rubber rim
Fixings	Galvanised fixings and screws
Dimensions	Maximum height (including fully-grown plants) 1m

DRAFT

Document Set ID: 6866291
Version: 3, Version Date: 21/09/2021



Figure 4. Approved treated pine planter box

Treated Pine Planter (ACQ or LOPS only*)

Board size	90-180mm maximum height x 30-40mm thick
Corner post	50mm x 50mm stake x 400mm high
Fixings	Galvanised fixings, minimum M8 diameter
Dimensions	Maximum height (including fully grown plants) 1m

* ACQ indicates the use of Copper and Quaternary Ammonium compound to protect against fungi, termites and other wood-boring insects.
* LOPS indicated light organic solvent preservative, and is a waterproof timber treatment, using wax or resin the help make the timber water resistant.
* CCA is not permitted, indicates copper chrome arsenic and should not be used for planter boxes.



Public liability

This policy has been developed to manage public liability risks. However, this does not prevent a third party from making a claim against the resident for any injury, loss or damage caused by the road verge garden or planter boxes.

What should you plant?

1. A list of recommended plant species can be found in *Appendix E: Native Plants Fact Sheet*

2. Plant selection for landscaping works should be guided by Council's principal vegetation theme of 'waterwise' native plants. Staff from Council are happy to help suggest plants to suit your site, and can suggest a number of nurseries to buy these plants. Contact Council's Sustainability Team for advice on planting on your nature strip.

3. Plants should be tough enough to withstand the pressures of occasional pedestrian traffic.

4. Plants **must not** grow over the edges of the footpath or kerb. Plants should be able to cover the ground effectively to compete with weeds.

5. If you have an interest in growing food plants its best to find a local community garden, information about community gardens can be found on Council's website. Growing edible plants on the nature strip is not permitted for health and safety reasons. It is possible that lead could occur in high levels alongside roads due to past use of lead based fuels.

6. Plants must not have thorns, prickly leaves or other parts that might harm users of the nature strip. Plants must not be identified by the *Biosecurity Act 2015*, see *Appendix B: CCBC Noxious Weed Species List.* This is highly important as seeds from nature strip plants can easily get into the stormwater system and reach our waterways where weeds are difficult to control. These plants have a history of destroying nearby natural vegetation areas making them unsuitable for native animals and birds.

DRAFT

Document Set ID: 6866291
Version: 3, Version Date: 21/09/2021

City of Canada Bay

Check in with neighbours

It is recommended that you notify your neighbours about your intentions to establish a nature strip garden before planting to keep them informed. If you live in a strata unit, seeking a strata body approval is required. You must consult with neighbours / or strata to tick this box on checklis and provide a copy of the approval from the strata committee as part of the application..

Safety during planting

1. During the installation process, no tools, equipment and materials are to obstruct the footpath.

2. For health and safety purposes, the resident should wear suitable sun smart attire during the planting process, ensure access to safe drinking water and be of good health to undertake planting activities.

Maintenance

1. Council will take no responsibility for any maintenance or damage to the garden. If the garden is not maintained to the guidelines, Council can issue an order under the *Local Government Act 1993* or under the *NSW Roads Act 1993*. The nature strip planting is to be established under the full financial responsibility of the adjoining landowner. This includes associated costs with planting, maintenance and removal if the area is unable to be maintained or if the owner is selling or moving from the property.

2. Nature strip plantings and planter boxes that are unable to be maintained or managed are to be returned to grass (Buffalo) nature strips. The cost of this removal will be passed onto the owner of the property. This includes nature strips that pose a hazard or circumstances prior to the sale of the property, unless otherwise agreed in the contract for sale and is at the cost and responsibility of the adjoined landowner.

3. Council reserves the right to make assessments of all nature strips and to order removal where appropriate.

4. Residents are to keep their nature strips neatly maintained, free of litter and in a tidy state.

5. If Council or a service provider needs to access utilities within the nature strip, restoration of any nature strip garden will be limited to the return of grass (Buffalo) and soil.

6. If Council is required to widen the footpath in the future, the resident will be notified in writing. The resident will be required to return the nature strip (or part of the nature strip) to its original condition (Buffalo grass). This will be determined on a case by case basis. Following the footpath works, Council will reinstate the nature strip to its original condition as a grassed verge.

Utilities and service maintenance works

7. Utility companies that supply water, gas, electricity and telecommunications may from time to time require access to the nature strip to perform maintenance work. The utility companies are required to make good the nature strip following maintenance work, but are not required to re-instate residential nature strips that have been landscaped other than in grass.

8. Council cannot guarantee that any of the maintenance contractors will replace plants and mulch to match the condition that existed prior to maintenance work. Council will not be responsible for replacing plants or landscaping as a result of such works.

DRAFT

Document Set ID: 6866291
Version: 3, Version Date: 21/09/2021

Examples of non-compliant nature strip gardens





The gardens above are non-compliant. These gardens have the following non-compliant issues:

- Includes hard landscaping elements, including raised edges which may create a trip hazard
- Plants overgrown, spill onto the footpath and block lines of sight for pedestrians and vehicles using the road



The garden above is non-compliant. This garden has the following non-compliant issues:

- Artificial or synthetic grass is not permitted. It inhibits rainwater soaking into ground, adds to stormwater run-off. Is very hot in summer contributes to heating effect in summer months. Can be a trip hazard.

DRAFT

City of Canada Bay

Complaints management

If Council receives complaints in regard to a nature strip planting, laneway garden or planter box, Council will assess the complaint against the policy, guidelines and site specific conditions. A site that has not been maintained, is neglected, abandoned or has become hazardous will be deemed non-compliant with the policy.

Council may issue instructions to reinstate the garden to a satisfactory standard. In certain circumstances, Council may require that the nature strip garden be removed and the area to be reinstated with grass to Council's standard.

Non-compliance with Council directions to restore or remove a nature strip garden may results in Council removing the plants and recovering costs.



Callistemon

Submitting the checklist – Appendix A

To be approved applicants are required to return signed completed Checklist to Council.

The checklist is available as Appendix A to the policy and guidelines, available on Council website

Please follow the following steps before submitting your checklist.

1. Make sure you have read and understand these guidelines. If you have any questions or would like to discuss your proposal please contact Council's Sustainability Team on 9911 6555.

   If you are planning to use a planter box please provide information regarding the specifications.

2. Plan your nature strip garden. Useful things to consider include: the amount of sunlight the garden will receive, the type of soil present, potential run-off, what style of garden will work best, proximity to trees, other gardens and other physical constraints.

3. Discuss and provide information regarding the plants you intend to use in your nature strip garden with your neighbours and attempt to accommodate any concerns they may have.

4. Once you and your neighbours are happy with your plans, fill out the Checklist – Appendix A and return it to Council.

   Email: council@canadabay.nsw.gov.au

   Post: Locked Bay 1470, Drummoyne 1470

   Drop off: 1a Marlborough Street, Drummoyne 2047



Male Superb Fairywren

DRAFT

Document Set ID: 6866291
Version: 3, Version Date: 21/09/2021