

Edible streetscape guidelines

These guidelines developed by Council will assist in making edible streetscape gardening effective, enjoyable and safe for all.

Before you get started planting your edible streetscape, consider the 3-step process below.

Step 1 - Securing a Suitable and Safe Site

Prior to making final decisions on your edible streetscape project, it is recommended you contact Council's **** on ph. ****.

A site meeting with *** can help you work through your objectives for the site, help identify any site constraints and actively assist you in getting any necessary approvals from relevant Council departments and/or other government departments where required e.g. the RTA. These would generally only be required if the project is considered a community garden i.e. numerous people along the same street undertaking the project together.

It should be noted that there may be some instances where approval may not be given to plant a particular street, for example, where street planting or water sensitive urban design treatments exist or are planned for the site or street.

The Council *** can provide advice and assistance on the following:

- preferred types of sites and locations for your edible streetscape garden
- how you can address potential hazards for pedestrians and other traffic;
- ensuring that appropriate lines of sight for traffic, access for pedestrians and servicing of local infrastructure are maintained;
- the design and construction of the edible streetscape, including sustainable sources of construction materials, soils, fertilisers and pest control products and
- any safety issues you need to consider and safety devices you need to use during the construction and maintenance of your edible streetscape.

Step 2 - Securing Neighbourhood Support

If you are hoping to establish a street-wide edible streetscapes project this will be considered a Community Garden (see Community Garden Policy).

Step 3 - Approval from Council

Before you start planting out the edible streetscape, you need to complete an application form.

The application form will outline the following:

- the proposed location and design of nature strip garden or garden bed and
- name and contact details of the person nominated as the primary contact in relation to the construction and maintenance of the edible streetscape.

Once you have completed and submitted the application form, Council will issue you with an approval that will list a set of conditions you will need to comply with. The approval will document:

- any specific conditions relating to:
 - whether or the provision of public liability insurance cover related to the edible streetscape is required
 - safety requirements during establishment of the edible streetscape and
 - removal of the edible streetscape if it is no longer required or inadequately maintained
- the understanding of the nominated primary contact person to report to Council in the event that a new primary contact person is nominated or substantial changes to the initiative are proposed.

The process for submitting your application is to either email it to Council on **** or to visit the Council office at ****.

Other things to consider...

By following these precautions when planning for and working on your edible streetscape, you will ensure your own safety and the safety of your community.

Infrastructure and Soils

Make sure you know what service infrastructure exists near the site (such as sewage pipes, power lines etc) to avoid any damage.

Council's *** can help you find this information.

Soils in the urban area may contain some level of contamination. It is best to use fresh, well draining, preferably composted soil, especially for edible crops. This ensures you start with the right soil rather than a batch of average soil that requires added nutrients and produces sickly plants

The base level of the planting should be below ground level or the level of curbing to prevent mulch from spilling out onto the footpath or road.

Find out about underground pipes and cables

Dial Before You Dig is a free, online information service on underground pipes and cables anywhere in Australia—<http://www.1100.com.au> Phone: 1100 during business hours.

Roads and Traffic

Depending on the location of your edible streetscape, approvals from RTA or the Local Traffic Committee may be required prior to implementing your edible streetscape initiative. Council *** can provide further advice.

When working on your edible streetscape, be aware that you are on a road and keep an eye out for passing cars, bicycles and pedestrians. The minimum safety devices that you should use will depend on your situation will be noted in your approval.

Make sure the height and mass of plants in your nature strip garden or garden bed are not going to obstruct sight lines for pedestrians, cyclists and cars. These details will be included in your approval from Council.

COUNCILS TO INSERT GENERIC TRAFFIC CONTROL PLAN FOR SITE CLEARANCES

Trees, shrubs, landscaping, plantings, retaining walls and other physical structures including hard edged gardens or rockeries shall not be placed within 1.5 metres of either side of underground services to allow adequate access for maintenance.

Where plantings or landscaping is approved and then carried out within the footpath or nature strip area, a corridor of 1.5 metres wide (minimum) and 2 metres high (minimum) shall be maintained for pedestrian traffic.

A clear area width of 1m behind the kerb is to remain free of massed planting or hard landscaping for the safe movement of pedestrians.

To avoid obstructing vision of drivers and pedestrians, trees (including shrubs, planting and landscaping) are not to be closer than 15m from the building line of the intersecting street.

No landscaping or planting is to be placed where it may obstruct the vision of drivers or pedestrians, adjacent to driveways.

All plantings and landscaping is to be kept a minimum of 1.5m from table drains to allow drainage and access for Council maintenance.

If plantings are considered to be a problem, Council will notify the owner of the need for removal. If this notice is not complied with Council will remove any tree, shrub, planting or landscaping and in the event of such removal, Council will not be responsible for the reinstatement or cost of items removed, and Council will recover the cost of removing any trees, shrubs, plantings or landscaping.

Design

As your edible streetscape will be located in a public place, you will need to be aware of the potential hazards of any materials that you may use or incorporate into your garden. For example, things like garden stakes can harm others. A detailed plan for your edible streetscape detailing all infrastructure will be required as part of your application to Council.

Ensure precautions are taken during the design, construction and operation of your garden to ensure soils and mulch will not leak from the garden into the stormwater drains. Suitable materials will be noted in your correspondence with Council.

Working on your edible streetscape

You are encouraged to follow sustainable gardening practices. Consider using organic products rather than standard chemicals.

You will be responsible for your own safety while working on your edible streetscape and you should also be mindful of potential risks to passers-by.

When you work on your edible streetscape, health & safety precautions are your responsibility. Consider the following safety precautions:

- wear appropriate light coloured clothing
- be sun smart
- use tools appropriately and safely and

- carefully handle materials and soils.

It is important to maintain your edible streetscape. Your approval may be reviewed by the **Council ***** and where gardens are not being maintained, Council may ask that the planting be removed and the site reinstated.

Care for kerbside planting includes:

- regular watering
- mulching to reduce evaporative water loss from the soil and to reduce water consumption. Ensure the mulch you lay will not be washed into the stormwater system where it could block drains and pipes
- the application of compost or other organic fertiliser to stimulate healthy growth. Do not over-apply as rain could wash excess nutrients into the stormwater system
- monitoring and treatment of insect pest or plant disease infestation
- pruning of trees and shrubs to prevent their encroaching on pedestrian access.

In choosing plants avoid:

- trees with root systems that could damage roads and footpaths
- plants that are thorny or spiky and that could injure pedestrians
- plants that grow tall enough to contact electricity and broadband cables
- plants that would overhang the footpath where they could interfere with pedestrians and children in strollers
- plants with toxic foliage, flowers, fruit or nuts
- genetically modified crops
- species on the Weeds List of Bushland Friendly Nursery Scheme (check current list at www.bfns.org.au)
- declared noxious weeds (check Far North Coast Weeds web site for current list at www.fncw.nsw.gov.au).
- whether any proposed trees have a known propensity to cause injury to persons or damage to any property by root exposure, invasion or infestation

to buildings and structures; sewer, water, gas, electricity, telecommunication and public utility systems; or 'sudden branch drop syndrome'.

Avoid raising low edges around verge gardens as they may become trip hazards. Use pruned, close planted, wiry shrubs such as rosemary to form living edges but do not allow the foliage to overhang the walkway. It may be better to make a raised verge garden at least 50cm in height rather than make low edges around a ground level verge garden.

Do not build up verge gardens around the trunks of street trees. This can introduce disease to the trees and weaken them. It can work well if you make a verge garden between street trees and allow access to the street between the end of the verge garden and the street trees.